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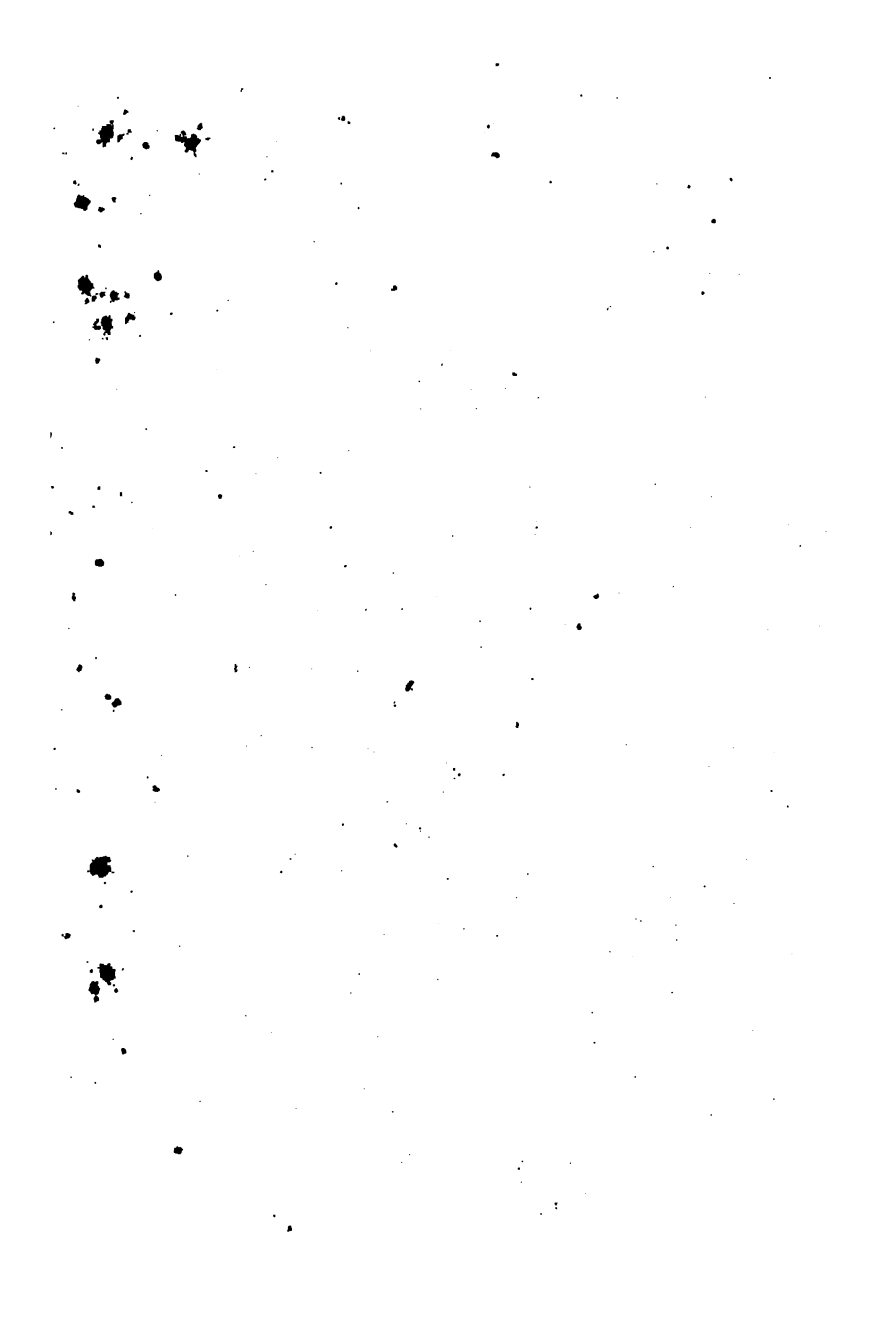
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HISTORICAL NARRATIVES

From the Russian

RIVINGTONS

[illegible]

HISTORICAL NARRATIVES

From the Russian

By H. C. ROMANOFF

AUTHOR OF "SKETCHES OF THE RITES AND CUSTOMS OF
THE GRECO-RUSSIAN CHURCH"



RIVINGTONS

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THESE Narratives are compiled from sources of undoubtable veracity, an enumeration of which, however, would be of no weight or use to the ordinary English reader, for whom the translation is intended.

Mr. ANDRÈEFF's narrative, rich and interesting as it is in material, is extremely disorderly and rambling in the original, abounds in repetitions, and in allusions to persons and things not generally known. I confess that I have taken great liberties with it, curtailed it considerably, and compiled from its parts or chapters one continuous narrative, without however departing from the letter. For this, and all the imperfections of my translation, I make my humble apology both to him and to Mr. SHOU-BINSKY.

H. C. ROMANOFF.

March, 1871.



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CHAPTER I.

COURT JESTERS AND THEIR WEDDINGS, IN THE REIGNS OF PETER THE GREAT AND ANNA IVANOVNA.

OUR former sovereigns loved to be surrounded by dwarfs, story-tellers, jesters of both sexes, and buffoons. In their leisure hours, in the absence of more intellectual recreations, they diverted themselves with the fooleries, contortions, grimaces, and singing of their "amusers." As far as we are aware, the first jesters in Russia appear at the Court of John the Terrible (1533—1584). Their duty was to make the Tzar laugh before and after an execution. Among them, Prince Joseph Gvozdieff, who had high rank at court, was

particularly celebrated. On one occasion during a feast, John, displeased at a jest of his, emptied a tureen of hot cabbage-soup over him; the unfortunate jester yelled aloud with agony and attempted to run away. The Tzar chased him and struck him with a table-knife; Gvozdieff, streaming with blood, fell to the floor senseless. Dr. Arnolf was sent for without delay. "Heal thou my good servant," said John, "I have been playing incautiously with him!" "So incautiously," replied Arnolf, "that God alone can raise him! He breathes no more." The Tzar waved his hand, called the dead jester "a dog," and went on with his diversions. Whenever John rode out, he was always accompanied by jesters in buffoons' costume, made of cloth of gold; their steeds were generally oxen. The mild and virtuous Tzar Feodor Ivanovitch¹ (1584—1598), frequently passed whole evenings in the company of his jesters, conversing and playing with them. The Toushinky pretender also had a jester,

¹ Son of John the Terrible.

named Koshelioff, with whom he scarcely ever parted, and who shared his miserable fate².

The boyarins and other grandees, in imitation of the Court, began to set up jesters, or as they were then called, fools, on their own account; and they soon became an indispensable addition to every household of importance. To become a jester it was not necessary to have any great wit or readiness; it was quite sufficient if the candidate were ugly, stupid, or merely had an impediment in his speech. They were generally selected from among the older and uglier of the serf-servants, and the older the fool or she-fool was, the droller they were supposed and expected to be. The fool had the

² This Pretender, and several others before and after him, personated, with more or less success, the youngest son of John the Terrible, who was murdered in 1591, aged eight years. The first of these pretenders actually deceived the mother of the murdered prince, and she acknowledged him as her son; it is difficult, however, to decide whether she did so from conviction or fear. He reigned about ten months, and was killed by the populace in 1606. The second was the Touthinky "robber," above mentioned, who contrived to persuade Sigismund, King of Poland, to assist him.—(Tr.)

right to sit at table with his master, and say whatever came into his head. The she-fool always attended the person of her mistress, played with her at cards and dice, never daring to win; communicated all the household scandal to her, and at night-time whiled away her sleepless hours by nonsensical tattle and story-telling. On holidays the fools of both sexes, dressed up in strange garments made of patch-work, in absurd caps hung with various bells and rattles, amused the guests with songs, dances, and home-made jokes, receiving generous rewards, but sometimes slaps and punches, and in an ill hour the whip.

At Peter the Great's Court there were always several jesters, but they served not merely for amusement. By their means Peter frequently made game of the old-fashioned prejudices and customs so firmly rooted in society, and under cover of a jest conveyed many a plain truth to the nobles. When the latter used to complain to him of the too unceremonious behaviour of the jesters, he would answer, "What can I do with them? they are fools, you know!" Of Peter's

jesters, the most popular were Balakireff and Lacosta.

Balakireff, the son of a poor landed proprietor, was originally an attorney, near Novgorod, but in 1718 was summoned, with other nobles, to Petersburg, in order to enter the Imperial service, and was appointed to learn engineering. In the capital he became by chance acquainted with Monss, the chamberlain and favourite of the Tzar, pleased him by his merry disposition, drollery, and ready wit, and was made by him a friend of his house. Monss, who had also ingratiated himself into the favour of the Empress Catherine, procured the situation of Court lacquey for Balakireff, making him the go-between of himself and the Empress; he commissioned him to listen attentively to all the Court tattle, to find out all the Court news, and by his means sold his services and patronage to many who required them. The pretended fool and ex-attorney attracted the attention of Peter, and obtained the right of jesting and playing the fool in his presence. He did not, however, enjoy this new distinction long.

Having been arrested, together with Monss, in 1724, he was subjected to the torture, and being convicted of "various knaveries," was severely punished with the bastinado, and condemned to banishment to Roghervik and to hard labour. On the accession of Catherine I., Balakireff was liberated and made soldier in the regiment of the Transfiguration. Notwithstanding all his trouble and endeavours he did not succeed in getting into Court again until the reign of Anna Ivanovna, when he received the official title of "Court Jester."

Lacosta, a Portuguese Jew, wandered about Europe for several years, occupying himself in various ways; for instance, he kept a broker's office at Hamburg, but eventually he came to Russia to seek his fortune. His droll personal appearance, his being able to speak nearly every European language, and the talent peculiar to the Jewish nation of adapting himself to every one he might meet, were the means of his obtaining the situation of Court Jester. He was cunning in the highest degree, and deeply read in the Holy Scriptures. Peter

was very partial to Lacosta, and was fond of having theological disputes with him. He granted him the privilege of receiving a thousand roubles every time His Imperial Majesty should forget to propose a toast to the health of "Ivan Michaelovitch's family³," i. e. the Russian fleet. This toast was one of those that were always drunk at state banquets, and of course was never forgotten, since the Emperor's servants were ordered to remind their sovereign each time of it. Peter made Lacosta a present of the sandy and uninhabited island of Sommer, in the Gulf of Finland, and subsequently rewarded him for the conscientious and excellent fulfilment of his duties, with the title of King of the Samoyeds.

At the beginning of his reign Peter had instituted a Council or Society "most extravagant, most jesting, and most tipsy," and at the head of it placed his former tutor Zotoff, "Prince Pope, Joanicetas, Patriarch of Presburg, Kokovy, &c." This Society was formed

³ Admiral J. M. Golovin, born 1670, died 1730, Chief Superintendent in the Government shipbuilding yards.

exclusively of desperately intemperate persons, who were forced to attend at all solemn and half-solemn entertainments, assist at all processions and masquerades, and visit by turns the houses of rich persons, who were obliged to show the "extravagant company" the warmest hospitality, feed them to satiety, and treat them to drink to insensibility. Peter wrote with his own hand the statutes, instructions, manner of election and of receiving new members, and named himself Protodeacon of this Society.

Certain historians of Peter the Great detect in this institution of the "Extravagant Council," and in the title of "Prince Pope," an intention on the part of the Tzar to demean the dignity of the Patriarch⁴, and to make open game of it; but it was far more probably merely a joke, quite comprehensible at the time that we are speaking of—that of a new, young, and but half-formed Society. Zotoff received the title of Patriarch at a time when, in all probability it had not entered Peter's head to abolish

⁴ The Patriarchate was abolished by Peter in 1700, on the death of the Patriarch Adrian.—(Tr.)

the Patriarchate. If we allow that the Tzar indeed wished to turn the Patriarch into ridicule in the person of "Prince Pope" and in the "Extravagant Council," we must also admit that he meant to make game of his own autocratic power, for he had a jester called the "King of Presburg," "Prince Cæsar,"—i. e. Romadonoffsky, to whom kingly honours were publicly shown.

One of Peter's favourite diversions was to get up "curious" weddings among his jesters. The first of these took place in January, 1694, at Moscow, when Yakoff Tourgénieff, a court jester, married the widow of a secretary. An eye-witness thus describes this event. "In the procession with the newly-married pair were boyarins, high officers of state, and other dignitaries mounted on oxen, goats, swine, and dogs; their attire was droll; in bass sacks, bark hats, blue linen kaftans, trimmed with cats' paws, in grey and many coloured kaftans trimmed with squirrels' tails, in straw boots, mufflers of mouse-skin, and hats to match. Tourgénieff and his wife rode in the Emperor's

best velvet carriage, and after them came the Troubetskoys, the Sheremétieffs, Golitzins, Gagarins, &c., in velvet kaftans. The wedding festivities took place in the tents between the Transfiguration and Semionoff regiments, lasting three days.

In 1702, soon after his return from his first journey abroad, when he introduced many new customs and the universal costume of Europe into his Empire, Peter celebrated the nuptials of another jester, Shansky, with the revival of all the wedding customs of the olden time. The guests of both sexes were attired in old-fashioned dresses, and treated to hot wine, beer, and mead, with the most pressing entreaties and lowest obeisances. Peter, addressing himself to the party which held up for the old Russian customs, teased them, saying, "Your ancestors used to drink these beverages." "Old customs are better than new ones," and so on. The bride and bridegroom were lodged in a tower at the Kouriatny gates, and for several days all who came to congratulate them were treated to wine. Peter desired

that an engraving, representing the wedding feast, should be printed and distributed among the people. This curious engraving is now extremely rare. It represents a feast in a large saloon, with a double row of windows, with eight mirrors and a large lustre in the middle of the ceiling, a porcelain covered stove in the left corner, and a large Icona^b of the Saviour in the right. Ten tables are arranged on three sides of the room; at the farther end, on an elevation, sit the more eminent guests. Each table is numbered, and beneath the picture is an explanation thereof, according to these numbers. It is called "A description of the Wedding of the most worthy Theophilactus Shansky, the diverting jester and laugh-inticer of our most autocratic Monarch. 1st February, 1702. In the house of the late General Franz Lefort, &c., &c." There are upwards

^b A picture of the Saviour, His mother, or the saints. Iconas are frequently covered with silver plates, representing the clothing of the figures, with open spaces for the face, hands, and feet of the painting behind them to be visible. They hang in the corner of every room of a Russian house.—(Tr.)

and the procession wound up with a long and countless train of people, all eager to behold so rare and amusing a sight. In this order the procession reached the Cathedral of SS. Peter and Paul, where the marriage ceremony was performed, during which Peter himself held the crown over the head of the bride⁹. From church the party repaired by water to the Vasily island, to the house of Prince Menschikoff. Here, in the middle of the principal saloon, small, low tables were spread on purpose for the dwarfs; among them, beneath two silken canopies, was a separate table for the newly-married pair and the bridesmen, which was still further distinguished by garlands hanging over each of the four seats. The Tzar, the Duke of Courland, and the rest of the guests sat at long narrow tables arranged round the room, so that the spectators, sitting as they did with their backs to the wall, could conveniently see all the dwarfs. From among the latter were selected one senior and eight junior

⁹ Vide "Rites and Customs of the Greco-Russian Church", 1869, page 211.

bridesmen, with gay knots of ribbon and lace on their right arms, who marched solemnly between the tables, and helped the tiny company to wine; the dwarfs, throwing aside all etiquette, and apparently unaware that they were the objects of the surrounding spectators' curiosity and attention, talked and laughed freely, and made themselves quite at home. At the commencement of the banquet the bridesmaids had pinned a wedding-favour to the sleeve of the dwarf who was appointed to wait on them, and he, like a gallant cavalier, thanked them all with a kiss. During dinner music was performed, and when the time came for the toasts to be drunk, the nine bridesmen came up to the Tzar with enormous glasses in their hands, and bowing down to the ground, drank off their contents to the last drop. The festivities were somewhat interrupted by the sudden illness of Menschikoff's little son; but, notwithstanding, they continued till nearly midnight. The dwarfs romped, leaped, turned head over heels, danced, and diverted the guests with their jests and grimaces, and, not-

withstanding their natural ugliness, contrived to make themselves uglier still. At the breaking up of the party, the Tzar conducted the bride and bridegroom home, and the guests returned to their houses, extremely pleased with the fun they had enjoyed.

We think that it will not be superfluous to relate the further history of the couple in question. In less than a year the young wife died after much suffering, and her infant also perished, which caused the prohibition of marriages between dwarfs. In the beginning of the year 1724 her husband followed her, and his funeral formed a plea for more ceremonies, which took place on the 1st February. The melancholy procession set forth from the Winter Palace, and opened with thirteen little choristers and the smallest priest of all the clergy of St. Petersburg; six little horses covered with black drew a little catafalque, on which lay the little coffin, covered with black velvet. The horses were led by the pages of the court, and on either side marched a long line of the Grenadier Guards, dressed in mourn-

ing and weepers, and with torches in their hands. After the body walked a tiny dwarf with a staff, as marshal; he was dressed in black, with a large hat, and a band which reached to the ground. After him came several dwarfs in pairs, all in black mantles, the smallest walking first. Further followed two parties of dwarfesses, each with its marshal, and lastly a weeper, also a dwarfess. All had court footmen with torches as attendants. From the Winter Palace to the end of the Neffsky Prospect¹ the dwarfs went on foot, but here they were packed into an enormous carrier-sledge drawn by six horses, and driven to the Yamskoy burial-ground, where the body was interred. The Tzar accompanied the procession as far as the Gastinoy Dvor², and in the evening gave a supper in remembrance of the deceased in his own apartments.

In 1714 the Patriarch Zotoff, Prince Pope,

¹ The principal street of St. Petersburg, several versts in length.

² A collection of shops, about half-way down the Neffsky Prospect.—(Tr.)

now seventy years old, took it into his head to espouse an old lady of the name of Pashkoff, aged sixty. Peter at first opposed this marriage, but subsequently, indulging the fancy of the old man, he determined to celebrate the nuptials of "the most extravagant one," with due pomp and splendour. The Tzar himself composed an original invitation to the wedding festivities, the allusions in which are perfectly incomprehensible at the present time, but it is not the less curious for all that³.

All the invited guests, the list of whom was prepared by Peter himself, and printed on ten pages, amounted to four hundred persons. To each were sent four stammerers, with the following orders :—

"By an ukase from the Great Emperor the below-written person is informed that he is to attend the wedding of the Secret Councillor, Nicetas Moïseyevitch Zotoff, in the national costume of a certain country : each country to

³ In the original the document in question is given, but as it would indeed be "perfectly incomprehensible" to the English reader, the translator takes the liberty to omit it.


have three representatives. Having decided between themselves what costume they wish, they are to give notice of the same to the Councillor of State and Cavalier Count Gavryil Ivanovitch Golovkine, this 22nd September, in order that there be no more than three representatives of one country. The said costumes to be ready by the 29th September."

After many additions and alterations in the plan of the festivities, the invited guests assembled in their masquerade dresses at the house of Menschikoff's secretary Volkoff, on the 10th December. Here the Emperor inspected them, and signed a paper, showing how each was to be dressed, and what musical instrument he was to carry at the wedding.

The marriage itself, which had been put off several times, was celebrated 16th January, 1716. On that day, warned by the firing of three cannons, the guests repaired to Count Golovkine's house, and from thence they proceeded in ceremonious procession to the Cathedral of SS. Peter and Paul.

It opened with four moojiks dressed like

running footmen, but they were so tremendously stout that they could hardly move their legs; the betrothed followed, in the costume of a Cardinal, and supported by four bold and infirm old men dressed as magicians. In a sledge drawn by four immense bears, sat "Prince Cæsar" (i. e. Prince Romadanoffsky) in the character of King David, with bears' faces on his shoulder-belt: the Court lacqueys who attended him teased the live bears with spears during the whole time of the procession. Further came Prince Menschikoff, Counts Apraxin and Bruce, General Weide, and the Polish Ambassador, Count Fitznin, as Hamburg burgomasters, in black mantles and white ruffs, and with the above-mentioned bears' faces. The Tzar dressed like a sailor, with General Boutourlin, Prince Troubetskoy, and a ship-builder, named Sklayeff, in fantastic attire, beat the drums, and were followed by the rest of the masqueraders (upwards of 150 persons), in the most varied and comical costumes. Chinese with pipes, Venetians with clarionets, Turks with cymbals, Hungarians with frying-pans,



Poles with fiddles, Kalmyks with balalaikas⁴ and brass basins, Armenians and Japanese with flutes, Americans with wooden rakes, Roman archbishops with horns, running footmen with large sticks, miners with zitherns, German shepherds with pipes, doctors in red mantles and with books, sailors with rattles, Norwegian peasants with organs, pastors with rebecks, whale-fishers with harpoons, skippers with whistles, Prussian post-boys with horns, *assessors with nightingales*⁵, Bernardine monks with clay pipes, and so on. It would take too long to enumerate all the costumes in this singular masquerade, but besides those already mentioned there were Macedonians, Lithuanian knights, people in pelisses with the fur lining outside, &c., &c. Some with hautboys, grinding organs, pipes or bells; others with bladders containing a few dried peas, with pans, bag-pipes, kettle-drums, &c., &c. In the midst of the assessors and Hungarians, who carried glass vases, rode the best man, with six more

⁴ A primitive form of guitar, with three strings.—(Tr.)

⁵ Query.—(Tr.)

on asses, "without music, seeing that from extreme age they could not hold any thing in their hands." After the gentlemen came the ladies. The Empress Catherine, with eight ladies of her suite, in the costume of Friesland peasants; the Tzaritzas, Martha Matvéevna (widow of the Tzar Feodor Alexéevitch⁶), and Parascovia Feodorovna (widow of the Tzar Ivan V.⁶), and the Tzarevna Natalia Alexeevna⁷, in the dress of Poland; the Tzarevnas Anna, Catherine, and Parascovia Ivanovna⁸, in that of Spain; the consort of Alexis Petrovitch⁹, in that of ancient Germany; the rest wore Chinese, Hungarian, Polish, Novgorod, and other costumes. This motley crowd moved along the streets in slow procession, accompanied by a deafening din—the clangings, scrapings, and squeakings of the divers musical instruments—the despairing roars of the bears that drew Prince Cæsar, and by the approving murmur of tens of thousands of spectators, who had as-

⁶ Brothers of Peter the Great.


⁷ Sister of the same.

⁸ Daughters of Ivan V.

⁹ Son of Peter, by his first wife.—(Tr.)

sembled from far and near to see the extraordinary sight. At church the ceremony was performed by a High Priest of ninety years of age, and on its conclusion, all who took part in the procession returned in the same manner as before to the home of the newly-married pair, who, during dinner time, though hardly able to stand, handed wine to the guests. Pails of wine and beer, with various eatables, were prepared for the lower classes. On the following day the guests went in the same costume to visit the bride and bridegroom, and afterwards to dine with Admiral Apraxin; in the evening they accompanied Prince Pope and his wife on a grand drive about the city. This diversion was repeated every day for a fortnight.

The aged Zotoff, whose health was completely undermined by intemperance, survived his wedding-day only a year and a half. On his death Peter, in the name of the Extravagant Council, wrote an eccentric letter to Prince Cæsar, begging him to seek out and appoint a new president "for the throne of the Bacchus-like father." Prince Cæsar, with the coincidence




of the Emperor, was pleased to appoint the Secret Councillor Pëtre Ivanovitch Boutourline, an aged and immensely fat man, who loved the worship of the god of the grape quite as much as his predecessor. The new Prince Pope hastened to inform his tipsy subjects of his accession to the jester's throne by a proclamation.

In 1720, the new monarch became a widower, and Peter seized the opportunity thus offered of repeating the absurd ceremony of which Zotoff was hero some years before. Notwithstanding the obstinate opposition of his widow, the aged lady Anna Tereméevna, the Tzar gave her in marriage to Boutourlin. This wedding was celebrated 10th September, 1721, with still greater splendour and ceremony than that of Zotoff.

At eight o'clock in the morning, all who assisted at the festivities assembled by signal on the Trinity Place, around a wooden pyramid that had been erected in remembrance of the taking of four frigates from the Swedes in 1714. All were in masks and in masquerade

costumes, which were concealed, however, from the envious gaze of the crowd, by long and ample black mantles. While the marshals were engaged in separating the maskers and arranging them in groups according to the order in which they were to move, the Tzar and the most important of the nobles were at mass in the Church of the Holy Trinity; after which the marriage service was performed, Prince Pope being in the full costume of a Cardinal. On the conclusion of the rite, Peter, in the dress of a Dutch sailor, came out of church and beat the drum. At this signal the assistants threw aside their mantles, and the place instantaneously became gay with hundreds of variously attired maskers. They commenced by walking slowly round the pyramid, in a procession strictly according to orders, and continued promenading in this manner for two hours, in order to see each other the better. The Tzar carried a drum, which was slung to his shoulder by a black velvet band embroidered in silver, and which he beat admirably. Before him marched three



trumpeters dressed like blackamoors, with white head-dresses, white aprons, and their clothes trimmed with silver lace; by his side he had three drummers, viz. Generals Boutourlin, Tchernichoff, and Mamanoff, dressed, like the Tzar, in sailor's costume. Then came Prince Cæsar in the dress of the ancient Tzars—a velvet mantle lined with ermine; a sceptre in his hand, and surrounded by life-guards and a crowd of servants in the ancient dress of Russia. Now came the Empress, habited as a Dutch peasant, in a petticoat and jacket of black velvet, trimmed with red taffety, in a simple cap of fine linen, and a little basket in her hand. This costume became her to perfection. Before her went hautboy players, and three chamberlains; on either side of her marched eight blackamoors in Indian costumes made of velvet, and with a bunch of flowers on their head-dresses. Behind the Empress were the two Mesdemoiselles Naryshkin¹, dressed exactly as she, and after them all the ladies;

¹ Relatives of Peter the Great's mother.


first, those belonging to court, in peasant garb of white linen and taffety, elegantly trimmed with red, green and yellow ribbons ; then the rest, costumed as shepherdesses, nymphs, negresses, Spanish ladies, nuns, Armenians, &c. &c. This division of the masqueraders was wound up by a Franciscan monk, of immense height and stoutness, with his pilgrim's staff, in his hand ; and after him moved the Princess Cæsarsha, very grand, in the costume of the ancient Tzaritzas—a long red velvet mantle trimmed with gold lace, and a crown, with real pearls and other jewels, on her head. The women of her suite were also dressed in the old Russian style. The Duke of Holstein² with his party, followed as French *vendangeurs*, in silk jackets and tunics of different colours, ornamented with ribbons, their taffety hats decorated with bunches of waxen grapes round them. Hundreds of masks filled the interval between these and a few others that were more remarkable than

² Husband of Anna Petrovna, Peter's daughter.


the rest, for instance, a Turkish Mufti in his original garb ;—Bacchus, in a tiger's skin and wreathed with vines, very natural ; for his representative was a short and extremely stout person, with a face swollen and inflamed. This individual, by order of the Tzar, was kept thoroughly tipsy for the three days preceding that of the wedding, and not allowed to go to sleep for an instant. Menschikoff's family dancing-master was capital, also ; he was got up as a satyr, and performed the most astonishing jumps and steps as he moved along with the procession. Many represented storks with great effect. The Court giant (a Frenchman), and one of the tallest footmen were dressed up like babies, and were led in leading strings by two tiny dwarfs, attired like old men with long grey beards. One of the Court jesters, completely sewn up in a bear's skin, turned nimbly in a revolving cage made after the usual manner of squirrels' cages : every one supposed that it was a real bear, and only then were persuaded to the contrary when the jester jumped out of his cage, and scrambling

on the back of a live bear, rode him triumphantly. Having promenaded before a countless multitude of spectators, and inspected each other thoroughly, all the maskers repaired to the Senate-house, where Prince Pope entertained them with a wedding-dinner. The bridegroom and his bride sat at table beneath a canopy, he, with the Tzar and surrounded by his "extravagant" Cardinals, and she, attended by her ladies. Over the bridegroom's head hung a silver figure of Bacchus astride on a barrel, from which Prince Pope helped himself during dinner to vodka. The man who represented Bacchus in the procession sat at table astride on his barrel, and compelled the Pope and Cardinals to drink; dancing ensued, after which the guests dispersed.

On the following day after dinner all the maskers again assembled by signal at the same place as before, in order to accompany the newly-married pair, who had been accommodated with a lodging within the pyramid, to the post-office house on the other side of

the river, where the second day's festivities were to be celebrated. They repaired first to Prince Pope, who, standing at the door of the pyramid met each guest in a manner peculiar to himself—i. e. every one was obliged to drink a wooden spoonful of vodka from a large cup, congratulate the host, and kiss him three times. The couple then joined the procession, and having marched with them twice round the pyramid, crossed the Neva to the sound of music and the firing of cannons from the fortress and Admiralty. The "machine" on which Prince Pope and his Cardinals crossed the river was remarkable for its singular construction. A float was formed of empty, well-bunged barrels, tied in pairs together, and forming, at equal distances one from the other, six such pairs. On the top of each pair of big barrels was fastened a third and smaller one, on which sat the six Cardinals, bound with ropes lest they should fall into the water. Thus they floated, one by one, like geese. Before them swam an enormous beer-boiler, with a broad  fastened to it; it

was also placed on a pair of barrels and fastened by ropes to the Cardinals' flotilla; it was filled with beer in which floated an immense wooden bowl, where Prince Pope himself was seated! Both he and the Cardinals trembled with fear, though without serious reason, for every precaution had been taken to secure their safety. Ahead of the "machine" swam a wooden sea-monster, on which sat Neptune, who with his trident turned the Prince Pope round about in his wooden bowl. Behind on a separate barrel sat Bacchus, who without ceasing ladled the beer in the boiler where the Pope, evidently much vexed with both his neighbours, floated. All these barrels, large and small, were tugged by several boats, the Cardinals all the time making a deafening row by blowing cows' horns. When the Prince Pope, on his safe arrival at the other side of the river, attempted to leave his boiler, several maskers whom the Emperor had sent apparently with the kind intention of assisting him out, upset him completely into the beer. After this all the maskers repaired to the post-



office house where they feasted till late at night.

This was the last jester's wedding in the reign of Peter the Great. A similar diversion took place once more—twenty years later—in the time of the Empress Anna Ivanovna.

This sovereign was more partial than all her predecessors to jesters. We have information which does not admit of doubt, that during the latter years of her life, weary of the affairs of state, and official receptions and gaieties, she would sit for hours in her arm-chair, listening to the nonsense of the jesters, and beholding their grimaces. When sickened of this she would call her maids of honour, and say to them, "Now, girls, sing me a song;" and they, standing in a circle, would sing until Anna Ivanovna began to yawn, when soldiers of the Guard, with their wives, appeared on the scene, and performed the national dance, in which very frequently the nobles who were present, and even the members of the Imperial Family, also joined. Derjavin³ tells us that every time

³ A celebrated poet.

the Empress attended mass at the Court Chapel, her jesters used to seat themselves in *loukoshkos*⁴ in the room through which she would have to pass on returning to her apartments, and cackle like mother-hens. Sometimes she would make them sit in a row with their faces to the wall, and by turns overturn each other; the jesters would get into a rage, fight, pull each other by the hair, and scratch till the blood came. The Court went into raptures with the scene, and "died" of laughing. Once on a time, one of the jesters, feeling indisposed, refused to take part in this amusement, upon which he was immediately cruelly bastinadoed. Anna Ivanovna instituted the miniature Order of S. Benedict, as a reward and encouragement for her jesters. It was very like that of S. Alexandre Neffsky, and was worn on a red ribbon. Besides Balakireff and Lacosta, whom the Empress inherited from Peter the Great, she had the following jesters

⁴ Bark pails, much used in Russian housekeeping, in which hens and other domestic fowls are set.

—Pedrillo, Count Apraxin, Prince Volkonsky, and Prince Golitzin.

Petro Mira, called for brevity Pedrillo, was an Italian by birth, and came to Russia as performer on the violin in the Court orchestra. On looking well about him, and becoming thoroughly acquainted with the tone of the society that surrounded him, the sharp-witted Italian perceived that the calling of a jester was more likely to be profitable to him than that of musician. Having the honour on one occasion to perform a certain solo before the Empress, Pedrillo played it with such comical grimaces, and made his instrument give forth such unheard-of sounds and passages, that Anna Ivanovna was enchanted, and created him Court Jester on the spot. Pedrillo became a favourite with her : he contrived to amass a considerable capital in a short time, with which he prudently retired. Besides his official duties as jester, he served the Empress as agent in the purchase of various jewels and trinkets, and for this purpose was sent abroad more than once, and even corresponded with reigning

princes. When, in 1735, the Spaniards invaded Tuscany, which at that time was ruled by the weak-minded and dissolute Duke Gaston de Medicis, and the powers of Europe, in order to avoid war, decided, on terms that were beneficial to all classes, to make Tuscany over to the house of Lotharing on the death of the childless Gaston, Anna Ivanovna, desirous to avail herself of such an opportunity, commissioned Pedrillo to purchase at a low price the celebrated Tuscan diamond. By her desire, the jester addressed an original letter to the Duke, which proves that he was personally known to him, and at the same time that Gaston was indeed weak-minded to an astonishing degree. The letter⁵ offers him 15,000 Russian soldiers, and an *avant-garde* of 40,000 Kozacks and Kalmyks, in order to drive the Spaniards into the heart of Africa—warning him, however, that these gallant troops must have a sufficient quantity of strong brandy prepared for their

⁵ This letter is next to untranslatable, on account of its obsolete queerness, and therefore I give merely the pith of its real import.

refreshment, "such as your Highness drank in Bohemia, and had the pleasure of being intoxicated with." He then offers to purchase the diamond, congratulated him on something, completely vague and incomprehensible, on his own part and that of the Empress, and concludes by wishing that he may live many years to enjoy the delicious wines of Monte Pulziana, Muscatel, &c., &c., and by recommending him, as a means of prolonging his life, to partake of similar amusements as his Imperial Mistress. We are not aware whether an answer was received to this epistle, and whether it led to any results.

Prince Nicetas Feodorovitch Volkonsky, a Court Chamberlain, became a jester in consequence of the personal revenge of the Empress on his wife Agafia Petrovna (*née* Bezstoujeff Rumin), who was remarkable for her wit, high polish, and unquiet disposition. She detested all the daughters of Ivan V., especially Anna; and during the reign of Peter the Great was the cause of much annoyance to them. In 1728, Princess Agafia Petrovna was brought to

judgment for participating in secret political relations with the Austrian ambassador, Prince Rabutin, and in other court intrigues, and was sentenced to confinement in the convent at Tikhvinsk. On her accession to the throne in 1730, Anna Ivanovna revenged herself on her former enemy—already vanquished and punished as she was—by degrading her fondly-loved husband. Prince Nicetas Feodorovitch, a sickly man of middle age, was made jester, with the further speciality of caressing and attending on the Empress's dog.

Prince Alexis Petrovitch Apraxin, nephew of the celebrated Admiral of Peter the Great's time, began service as Chamberlain to Catherine I., and in 1729 married the Princess Elena, daughter of Prince M. A. Golitzin, of whom we shall have to speak in due time. Attracted by the example of his father-in-law, Apraxin joined the confession of the Church of Rome, and, as a punishment for so doing, was made jester. He seems to have felt no very great aversion to his degrading duties, and to have fulfilled them with a good will rarely to be

found, nearly to the day of his death, which occurred in 1743. "Count N. T. Panin," observes Poroshin in his Memoirs, "used to relate of Count Apraxin, the Empress Anna Ivanovna's jester, that he was an insupportable buffoon, offended and insulted every body, and for this reason frequently got beaten."

Prince M. A. Golitzin, grandson of the celebrated Boyarin and favourite of the Tzarevna Sofia⁶, and son of the Viceroy of Perm, was born 1689, only a few days before his father and grand-father, having been deprived of their rank and property, were exiled to Pinéga. When he became sufficiently old, Peter the Great made him a soldier in one of the regiments of the line, where, he attained the rank of major with great difficulty in the fortieth year of his age. Having lost, in 1729, his wife Martha Maximovna (*née* Hvostoff), by whom he had a son and daughter (married

⁶ Elder half-sister of Peter the Great; a woman of great ambition and pretensions, who, in consequence of the active part she took in certain revolts and conspiracies, was confined by her Imperial brother in the Maiden Convent at Moscow.

subsequently to the Prince Apraxin above mentioned), Golitzin obtained leave of absence, and set out to travel in foreign countries. During a sojourn in Florence, he fell in love with an Italian of low birth, married her, and by her persuasion joined the Church of Rome. On his return to Russia he took up his abode at Moscow, carefully concealing his wife and his change of religion from every one; nevertheless his secret became known, and reached the ears of the Empress. Golitzin was brought to St. Petersburg and confined in the Secret Chancellery; by imperial order his marriage was annulled, his wife sent abroad, and he himself degraded to the rank of page and made Court Fool! The unfortunate man had not sufficient strength of character to prefer death to shame, and seated himself in his *loukoshka* at the very door of the Imperial Cabinet, into which his relatives proudly passed without announcement. Among other duties as jester, he was appointed to hand kvas to the Empress, from which he was nick-named by the courtiers, "the kvas-bearer." By this

appellation he was mentioned even in the official documents of the period.

In her female suite Anna Ivanovna had many women-jesters and fools, who amused her with their scandal and tattle. She was particularly fond of one of them, a Kalmyk of the name of Avodotia Ivanovna, and who was surnamed in honour of the Empress's favourite dish, *Boujenina*⁷. This Kalmyk, very far from handsome and no longer young, happened, during a conversation with the Empress, to express a wish to get married. Heartily laughing at this confession, the Empress asked Boujenina if she had a bridegroom in view, and on receiving an answer in the negative, said that she would take it upon herself to settle the affair. On the following day it was announced to Prince Golitzin that the Empress had found a bride for him, that he was to prepare himself for the wedding, and that her Imperial Majesty took all the expenses into her own hands. The idea of uniting two jesters in

⁷ Boujenina is roasted pork, with a sauce of onions, vinegar, and spices.—(Tr.)

marriage was received with the utmost amusement by her intimate friends. Chamberlain Tatyscheff proposed a plan to build a house of ice on the Neva and to celebrate the wedding there in "a curious manner." A special "masquerade committee," under the presidency of the Cabinet-Minister Volynsky, was immediately assembled and commissioned to have Tatyscheff's plan executed in the quickest and most superior manner.

The committee chose as the site of the "House of ice" the space between the Admiralty and the Winter Palace. The only material used was pure ice, simply cut into large blocks, which were placed one on the other and cemented together merely by pouring water over them. The architecture of the edifice was elegant enough; it was fifty-six feet long, seventeen and a half wide, and twenty-one high. Round the roof ran an open gallery, ornamented with pillars and statues; an entrance hall with a carved frontage led into a lobby, which divided the building into two large apartments; the lobby was lighted by four

windows, and each room by five, the panes being of the thinnest possible ice. The door and window-posts, and the piers were painted in imitation of green marble. Droll pictures, painted on linen and illuminated in the evening by a multitude of candles, were placed behind frames and glasses of ice. Before the house were placed six three-pounder cannons, and two eighty-pounder mortars, all made of ice; they were actually fired more than once. At the ice gates were two ice dolphins, from the mouths of which, by the aid of pumps, fire was poured forth, caused by lighted naphtha. Over the gates were ice vases containing ice flowers, and near them were trees, with branches, foliage, and birds sitting in the midst—all of ice. On either side of the house was a pyramid on a pedestal, with an ornamental frontage. In both of these was a round window, near which was painted a clock's face. Inside them hung large octagonal paper lanterns, painted with various droll figures. At night men concealed themselves inside the pyramids, lighted the lanterns, and made them

revolve before the round windows, to the infinite delight of a constant crowd, who also found great attraction in the ice figure of an elephant, as large as life, which stood to the left of the house. On its back sat an ice Persian, and two others stood at its sides. "This elephant," we are told by an eye-witness, "was hollow, and contrived in so cunning a manner, that during the day time it squirted water to the height of 246 feet; and at night—to the great wonder of the beholders—burning naphtha. Besides it could roar like a living elephant, by means of a man, hidden within it, blowing a trumpet.


The interior arrangement of the house was perfectly in accordance with its original exterior. In one room stood a toilet, two looking-glasses, several chandeliers, a watch, a bedstead, a stool, a grate and ice fuel. In the other were a carved table, two sofas, two arm-chairs, and a cupboard in which were a tea-service, glasses, wine-glasses, and dishes. In the corners were two statues of Cupid, and on the table were a large clock, a pack of cards,

and fishes for play. All these articles, without exception, were made of ice with extreme nicety, and stained to the colour of each thing represented; the ice logs and candles burnt by being thickly smeared over with naphtha.

Besides all this, to the "House of Ice" was added a vapour-bath, after the Russian fashion; it was heated several times, and any one who chose might steam himself in it.

By Imperial orders a couple from every people and tribe, under the dominion of the Empress, was summoned to the "curious" wedding of Prince Golitzin and Miss Boujennina; and they accordingly assembled from all quarters of the vast Russian empire. More than three hundred persons were thus collected, and the Masquerade Committee furnished each pair of representatives of their respective people with their correct national costume and musical instrument.

On the 6th February, the day fixed for the ceremony, after the nuptial benediction of the noble jester and his bride, the various-peopled bridal party set forth on a long procession from



the point of meeting. Here might be seen Yakouts, Khirghises, Fins, Votyaks, Kalmyks, Bashkirs, and many, many more "tongues and people," each in his national costume, and with his better half. Some rode on camels, others were drawn by deer, by dogs, oxen, &c., &c., accompanied by different sorts of music, and toys representing beasts, fishes, and strange birds. The procession opened with the newly-married pair, seated in an iron cage on an elephant's back.

The wedding party, under the direction of Volynsky and Tatyscheff, proceeded with music and singing past the Palace, through the principal streets, and finally stopped at the Duke of Courland's riding-school. Here, on several long tables, was prepared an abundant dinner, where each "representative" found his national dish and favourite beverage. During the repast Tredyakoffsky^s, the cele-

^s A very singular character, who wrote an astonishing quantity of nonsense in so grave and pedantic a form, that his writings, chiefly in verse, are preserved as a literary curiosity. They are made use of in public educational establishments of the higher class as a *punishment*; de-

brated professor of elocution, pronounced an oration in verse to the newly-wedded pair.

After dinner each couple performed their national dance, which delighted the Empress and all her nobles. On the conclusion of the ball the motley crowd, preceded as before by the Prince and Princess in their cage on the elephant's back, repaired to the "House of Ice," which shone with lustre, and produced a striking and elegant effect, the lights multiplying and reflecting back in the half-transparent walls. The ice dolphins and elephant threw forth volumes of brilliant flame, the droll pictures inside the pyramids revolved, to the infinite satisfaction of the public, who received the bridegroom and bride to their cool home with loud shouts of approbation.

Nine months after these festivities Anna Ivanovna departed this life, having nominated as her successor her infant great-nephew, the Prince of Brunswick, Ivan Antonovitch, whose

linquents being compelled to learn portions by rote. The oration above mentioned is absurd to the last degree, and utterly untranslatable.

mother, the Princess Anna Leopoldovna, a woman of a remarkably kind and amiable disposition, and otherwise possessed of admirable qualities, was appointed Regent during his minority. The first day that found her in power she discharged all the jesters, rewarding them suitably; and from that time the official calling of "Court Jester" was abolished for ever from the palace, though occasionally similar droll favourites appeared for a while at court, but without the name and dress of "fool."

In conclusion we have a few words to relate of the subsequent fate of Prince M. A. Golitzin. In 1741, he retired to Moscow, where eventually his Kalmyk wife died. She bore him two sons: Prince Alexis, who died unmarried; and Prince André, who espoused A. F. Hitrovo, and left a numerous family. In 1744, Prince M. A. Golitzin married for the fourth time, and became the father of three daughters. He died in 1778, at an advanced age.

CHAPTER II.

COUNT C. G. RAZOUMOFFSKY. (1724—1803.)

ON the 28th January, 1737, it being the birthday of the Empress Anna Ivanovna¹, the Tzarevna Elizavetta Petrovna² was present at Mass in the Chapel of the Winter Palace. During the singing of the Cherubim's Hymn she was struck by the remarkably clear and beautiful voice of the chorister who sang the tenor part, and inquired his name. She was informed that he was called Alexis Rozoum;

¹ Daughter of the Tzar Ivan V.; was born about 1690; began to reign 1730; died 1740. Ivan V. was brother of Peter the Great, and reigned jointly with him, on the death of their elder brother Tzar Feodor III.

² Daughter of Peter the Great and Catherine I. Born 1709; began to reign 1741; died 1760.

that he was the son of a Cossack, and had but recently arrived from Little-Russia. On the conclusion of Divine service, the Grand Duchess desired that Rozoum should be presented to her. Elizavetta was struck with his appearance still more than with his voice. Tall, well-made, and of a rather dark complexion, with regular features and remarkably fine eyes, Rozoum was indeed an exceedingly handsome fellow. The Grand Duchess persuaded the Lord High Marshal, Levenwolde, to make over the young chorister to her suite, and nominated him as bandourist³. The handsome Little-Russian began to make his appearance in the little circle of persons who were honoured with the intimacy of the Tzarevna, and enchanted all by his inimitable singing of the exquisite melodies of his native land. A splendid future soon opened before the singer—his name having been changed from Rozoum to Razoumoffsky, he became the favourite and chamberlain of Elizavetta Petrovna, and on her accession to the Throne, 25th November, 1741, he was made

³ Performer on the bandoura, a three-stringed guitar.

Actual Gentleman in Waiting, with the rank of General-in-Chief; subsequently he obtained the rank of Grand Master of the hounds, the Orders of S. Anna and S. Andrew, and several thousand souls⁴ of peasants.

Having gained thus rapidly and unexpectedly such an important position and such high rank at the Court of the Empress, Razoumoffsky's first care was to turn his attention to his relatives. At the time we are speaking of, his mother, Natàlia Damiànovna, was still alive; he had also three sisters, Agatha, Anna, and Vera, and one younger brother, Cyril, born in 1724. All the sisters were married—Agatha to a weaver, Anna to a cutter-out⁵, and Vera to a Cossack, all of whom, thanks to the patronage of their brother-in-law, were raised to nobility and appointed to important posts.


They all lived in the government of Tchernigoff, in the little village of Lemeshy, where Natàlia Damiànovna kept a little drinking-

⁴ Merely an official manner of expressing *male* serfs, as in England persons under age are called infants.—(Tr.)

⁵ A branch of the tailor's craft.—(Tr.)

house, and Cyril herded cattle. Alexis Grigorievitch longed to have them all with him; and for this purpose an embassy, in splendid equipages and charged with handsome presents, among which was a costly sable cloak, was sent to Lemeshy. On their arrival at the village the messengers asked "Where does Mrs. Razoumoffsky live?" The astonished villagers replied, "We never heard of such a lady; but there's Widow Rozoum, if it please you." The messengers bowed profoundly to Natàlia Damiànovna, presented her son's gifts to her, and in the most respectful terms requested her to prepare for setting out to Petersburg in the carriage that accompanied them. The old lady, scared at the suddenness of these proceedings, could not come to her senses for some time; she could not believe the words of the messengers, and kept repeating, "Good people, don't laugh at me! What harm have I done you?" Satisfied, however, at last of the reality of the invitation, she spread her sable cloak out on the floor of her cottage, seated herself and her gossips on it, drank a glass or

two of Little-Russian brandy with them "to smooth the road, and having collected all her children, set out on her journey. She was met by her son at the nearest post-house to Petersburg, and at first could not recognize her Alexis in the grand gentleman before her, all covered with orders, nor could she be persuaded to embrace and kiss him until he had undressed and shown her some moles on his neck, which were well known to her. The day after her arrival Natàlia Damiànovna squeezed in, and dressed out in hoops, with a monstrous coiffure on her head, her face powdered, rouged, and patched according to the fashion of the day, was presented to the Empress at the Palace. Forewarned that on the appearance of her Imperial Majesty she was to kneel, the old lady, on entering the reception-room and beholding her own figure in a large mirror, was on the point of going on her knees when her son perceived her mistake and explained it to her. When the Empress entered, Mrs. Razoumoffsky thanked her on her knees, in phrases previously learned by heart, for her gracious favours and bounty. Elizavetta Pe-



trovna received her in a most affectionate manner, kissed her, and said many kind things to her. Natàlia Damiànovna was made Lady of Honour, and in that capacity attended the Empress to Moscow, where she was present at the Coronation, and probably also at the marriage ceremony of the Empress and Alexis Grigorievitch, which tradition says was solemnized privately in 1742, in the village church of Perovo, near Moscow. Notwithstanding, however, that Mrs. Razoumoffsky was surrounded with the utmost care and kindest attention by her son and the Empress, she did not fancy remaining long at Court, and soon returned to her native place with her daughter. The sensible old lady fully felt what a ridiculous part she was obliged to play among the courtly crowd; the masqueradish style of life and the etiquette were a burden to her; she never heard a word of her native dialect, had no one with whom to share her impressions, no gossips to chat with. Her heart longed for "home."

Razoumoffsky consented to the departure of his mother and sister, but kept his brother with him, and occupied himself seriously with his

education. When sufficiently prepared, Alexis Grigorievitch sent him abroad in 1743, under the care of Teploff, a learned *Associate* of the Academy of Sciences, "in order that he might make up for lost time, and render himself more fit for the service of her Imperial Majesty; and by his future conduct to do honour and give pleasure to his family." Cyril Grigorievitch continued abroad two years. First he studied at Königsberg, where he obtained a good foundation of the knowledge of geography, history, and the German and Latin languages; then at Berlin, under the celebrated professor, Leonard Eiler; and, finally, in France at the University of Strasbourg. During this period he was made Gentleman of the Bedchamber⁶ (1743), on the 15th July of the following year was raised, together with his brother, to the title of Count of the Empire. In May, 1745, Count Cyril Grigorievitch returned to Petersburg, and without delay was promoted to the rank of Chamberlain and of Chevalier of the Order of S. Anna of the first class. Soon after this, 21st May, he was nominated President of the Aca-

⁶ An honorary title or rank.—(Tr.)

demý of Sciences, "in consideration of the remarkable abilities and scientific knowledge of the arts that is observable in him."

Fully acknowledging all the difficulties of his future duties, and how entirely he himself was unprepared for the proper fulfilment of them, the twenty-two years old President selected as his guide his former tutor, Teploff, who in consequence received the appointment of Assessor of the Academy. Razoumoffsky found the Academy in the most deplorable condition—it had neither funds, nor professors, nor pupils ;—its affairs were in the most terrible disorder ; the complaints and quarrels among the persons employed there frequently ended in fights, and more than once were enquired into by the Senate. The University and Gymnasium⁷ that were founded with the Academy existed only on paper. The President at first entered warmly into the work of improving the state of the Academy ; but soon, entangled by intrigues, and meeting with constant opposition to his plans in his subordinates, he lost

⁷ A high-class school, the synopsis of which must be thoroughly mastered before admittance into the University and other special academies.—(Tr.)

the interest he before felt. However, notwithstanding all this, he formed new rules, by which the duties of every member of the Academy were defined; procured an increase of the Academical funds to the amount of 53,000 roubles; secured the aid of the best teachers from the Neffsky, Moscow, and Novgorod Seminaries for the University and Gymnasium, and, finally, caused a journal, the first in Russia, to be published under his own personal patronage and surveillance, under the title of "Monthly Compositions, serving for utility and amusement."

A month after his appointment to the Presidency, 29th June, 1746, Razoumoffsky was made Chevalier of the Order of S. Alexandre Neffsky. About the same time the Empress betrothed to him her relative, Katerina Ivanovna Naryshkin^s a Maid of Honour, whose dowry consisted of upwards of 40,000 souls. The wedding was celebrated on the 27th October at the Palace with great splendour,

^s Naryshkin was the maiden name of the Tzaritza Natalia Kyrilovna, second wife of Alexis Michailovitch, and mother of Peter the Great.—(Tr.)

the Countess receiving the title of Lady of Honour. In 1748 the Empress decorated Razoumoffsky with her own hands with the Polish Order of the White Eagle, which was sent to him by King Augustus III., and on the same day nominated him Colonel of the Ismail regiment of Life Guards.

From the year 1734, on the death of the Hetman, Daniel Apostol, the management of Little-Russia had been confided by government to a corporation, consisting of six members, under the presidency of the Governor General of the Ukrain. The Little-Russians considered this arrangement as a violation of their rights and as inconvenient and extremely burdensome to themselves⁹. When Alexis Grigorievitch, who was remarkable for his passionate attachment to his native land, became the favourite of the Empress, they seized an opportunity that seemed to them particularly *apropos*, and in 1744 petitioned Elizavetta Petrovna for the renewal of the Hetmanship, and other advan-

⁹ Little-Russia became annexed to the Empire in 1654. It still retains its language, which differs from modern Russ—its national costume, habits, and dishes.—(Tr.)

tages to themselves of which they had been deprived. This petition, thanks to the "good patriot," as the Little-Russians called Count Alexis, was graciously received, but its decision was delayed by various causes for a considerable time, and it was not until the end of the year 1749 that an Imperial order was issued that "in Little-Russia the Hetmanship was to be as before, that is that the Hetman be selected from among themselves of their own native people, according to the rights and privileges of Little Russia, by vote of free voice." For the public announcement of this good news, and in order to be present at the election of the new Hetman, the Empress sent General-in-Chief Henrikoff to Gloushkoff¹. After frequent preliminary consultations with the higher classes of clergy and laity, Count Henrikoff named 22nd February, 1750, as the day of election. On that day the Colonels, Elders, Bountchouks², Gorget³ and registered Kozaks⁴ of every regiment assembled in the town. Count Henrikoff arrived


¹ A town in Little Russia.

² Military officers in Little Russia of the olden time.

at the market-place in a splendid carriage, drawn by six horses, and surrounded by a numerous and brilliant suite, and ascended the platform prepared for the occasion, which was enclosed by a balustrade and covered with woollen damask and crimson cloth. Near the Count stood the Metropolitan, Bishops, Archimandrites, and clergy in full canonicals, also the Elders and Bountchouks in full uniform; around them was the nobility of Little-Russia. Having bowed on all sides to the crowd, Count Henrikoff read the Empress's order aloud, and then, turning to his hearers, asked several times in a loud voice, "Who do you wish to be Hetman?" and received the unanimous answer from clergy and laity of high degree, from the nobility and military, that "as their truest and most military friend was Count Alexis Grigorievitch Razoumoffsky, they could not wish better than that his brother, a native Little-Russian, Count Cyril, should be Hetman." The people, by their repeated shouts, sealed the election. Count Henrikoff then congratulated all present on their newly chosen Hetman.

At a given signal 101 cannons were fired, to which the Kozacks replied by a running fire from their guns. After this the assembly repaired to the Church of S. Nicholas, where the Divine Liturgy and a special service for the long life of the Empress were sung. In token of gratitude to Count Henrikoff, the Elders presented him in the name of all Little-Russia with 10,000 roubles on a silver waiter; his suite received 3000; and the lower orders had several hundred pails of brandy dealt out to them to celebrate the "universal joy."

On the 5th June and 24th July, 1750, the Empress signed a number of ukases, confirming the election of Count Cyril as Hetman—conferring on him the manors of the ancient Hetmans, consisting, among other grants, of the towns of Batourine, Yampol, and Potchessa with their districts—permitting him to rebuild Batourine and to make it his residence—allowing him on state occasions and at public ceremonies to occupy the same place as the Field Marshals, with precedence; and finally, as he "had the superiority over other Hetmans," of



being a Count of the Empire, and, as the Empress felt "a peculiar confidence and good-will towards him," ordaining that in all papers he should be entitled "high and nobly born."

Towards the end of December, 1750, Razoumoffsky left Petersburg accompanied by his family, his inseparable companion Teploff, his cooks and musicians, his lacqueys and running footmen, his serjeants of the Ismail regiments, and even a troupe of actors. His cortége consisted of not less than forty carriages, with sixty horses for riding. At the village of Tovstogoboff, on the frontiers of Little-Russia, he was met by a company of soldiers, and a little farther, at Yasmany, by a deputation consisting of an archimandrite, a protopope, four priests, a clerk, and ten Bountchouks. As the cortége approached Gloushkoff, the carriage of the Hetman was surrounded by Kozacks and other military. The interior of the town presented a fence, as it were, on either side of the principal streets formed by double rows of Kozacks who welcomed the Hetman with music and the firing of cannon and guns. The General-

Elders and other high functionaries met him at the town gates and General-Captain Yakoubovitch made him a speech. The whole cortége drove straight to the Church of S. Nicholas, where the Bishop of Gomel pronounced all the titles of the Hetman, and sprinkled "the most illustrious" with holy water; from thence to the residence of the Count, where he was again met by the civil and military functionaries, and where General Skoropadsky expressed to him in the name of all Little-Russia, their joy and hopes on the occasion of his arrival. The garrison regiment, which stood around the church on guard, saluted him with a round of firing, and the soldiers on guard in the yard of the Hetman's residence, with lowered standard, and the beating of drums. The grandees of the place were invited to Count Cyril Grigorievitch's table, and during the repast instrumental music was performed, and at each toast cannon was fired. In the evening the town shone with illuminations.


The Count now began to live like a little king at Gloushkoff. This court became the

miniature copy of that at S. Petersburg. In his papers and orders the Hetman retained the received form "we," "our," "given this day at Gloushkoff," "it is our pleasure," &c., &c. He had a regular court suite and a distinct guard of honour about his person, similar to the corps of Life Guards and dressed in a green uniform; they were called "the Corps of the Hetman's Standard." The suite also counted among its number Bird-men and Beaver-Kozacks, whose duty it was to shoot game for the table of the Count and to catch beavers for his use. On solemn occasions and family festivals, there used to be processions to the Church of S. Nicholas or to the private chapel of the Hetman, where special services were performed, followed by the firing of cannon. After service the Count received the congratulations³ of the Elders and other functionaries, and in his turn congratulated them on promotion to rank, re-

³ The Russians still retain the custom of congratulating each other on high days and holidays, and subordinates make visits to their commanders, both in the civil and military service, for that purpose.—(Tr.)

wards, orders, &c., &c. Splendid banquets, masquerades, concerts, and French comedies were constantly given; in a word, all the minutiae of court life at Petersburg were copied in reduced form at Gloushkoff. There was but one thing which the Count had not—the Order of St. Andrew; but this too was conferred on him in 1752.

Many were the benefits and useful institutions that Razoumoffsky's dominion brought for Little-Russia. The liberation of the inhabitants of the Ukrain from their burdensome labours as serfs, the abolition of various taxes and collections, which were ruinous to the people—the establishment of free trade between Great and Little Russia—the doing away of customs, and the monopoly of tobacco and other articles, which was so bad for trade—the reduction of distilleries, which had wasted so much forest wood, and done such harm to agriculture and farming in general—the equalizing of military ranks in Little-Russia with those of Great-Russia—the removal of the old courts of justice, which Hmelnitzky closed, placing



justice in the hands of the higher ranks of the army—are among the most important services of Razoumoffsky to his native country.

Count Cyril Grigorievitch frequently availed himself of the invitations of the Empress to visit Petersburg, where he sometimes remained for a whole year together. In such cases the reins of government were left in the hands of the “General Court of Justice,” or, more correctly speaking, in those of Teploff, who, though he occupied no official situation, remained the Count’s principal adviser and confidential friend.

During his sojourns in the capital Razoumoffsky was the daily guest of the Empress, and took part in all the councils that were held concerning the affairs of government. He lived on the same magnificent footing at Petersburg as he did at Gloushkoff; his balls astonished his contemporaries with their hitherto unheard of splendour and luxury; the number of his servants and retinue amounted to two hundred and sixty persons—in his vast mansion crowds of visitors were received from early

morning till night, his abundant and elegant table was open to all comers, invited or uninvited; and on fixed days thousands of the poor crowded around the door of the Count's hospitable house, to receive munificent alms. The Empress continued to confer her favours and attentions on Count Cyril Grigorievitch with unvaried constancy; she stood godmother to nearly all his children, the Heir to the throne being godfather; she presented him with a snuff-box and her own portrait, both studded with rare jewels, and was constantly making him other valuable presents. The Grand Duchess Catarina Alexéevna⁴ was no less gracious to him than the Empress; she was on the most friendly terms with him, particularly after having become doubly connected with him by arranging the marriage of his favourite niece, Marina Zakreffsky⁵, with the Chamberlain, Leo Alexandrovitch Naryshkin.

In the meantime, however, the health of the

⁴ Consort of the heir, and afterwards Catherine the Great. She was a Princess of Anhalt.

⁵ Daughter of the ex-tailor brother-in-law.—(Tr.)

Empress had visibly declined, particularly from the year 1758. She had long suffered from an internal complaint which caused fits of great pain in her chest, and swellings of the legs. In November, 1761, she was attacked with ague, from the effects of a cold, which, thanks to the care of the court physicians, was subdued. On the 1st December, the Imperial patient began to amend, when suddenly, on the 12th of the same month, she was seized with alarming symptoms. The physicians bled her, and to their great astonishment found that there was inflammation. On the following day the bleeding was repeated, but without the slightest benefit to the sufferer; and on the 25th, at three o'clock in the afternoon, the Empress expired. The Counts Alexis and Cyril did not quit the bedside of their benefactress—she who had raised them from insignificance and poverty to the height of earthly honours. The tears and grief of both brothers were perfectly sincere. The deceased Empress, with all her failings, had the gift of inspiring her friends with a deep attachment to her person, and the sorrow of

the Razoumoffskys and other faithful servants of hers, was not regret for the end of their good fortune, but a heartfelt grief for the loss of one whom they truly loved with disinterested affection.

With the change of the sovereign came also a change of Count Cyril's position at court.

Peter III.⁶ was a kind-hearted and candid man, but with mediocre abilities, bad habits, and a capricious temper. On his accession to the throne, he set about making reforms with great warmth, but manifested with regard to them, notwithstanding his excellent heart and his earnest wish for the public good, a perfect absence of political tact. The crowds of exiles that were recalled from Siberia, the abolition of the Secret Council, the new rights of freedom granted to the nobility, spoke in favour of his equity and goodness; but other steps caused great displeasure to the circles in which they were taken. The clergy were deeply hurt by the intention of the Emperor to add the riches

⁶ Son of Anna Petrovna, Duchess of Holstein and daughter of Peter the Great.

of the monasteries to the funds of the Treasury, and by his open disrespect to the rites of the Greco-Russian Church. The latter circumstance served as a means in the hands of the clergy whereby to set the common people against him. The Guards murmured against the preference that the Emperor showed to the Germans, against the introduction of a new uniform according to the hated Prussian fashion, and against exaggeratedly strict discipline, and fatiguing exercises. The aristocracy were offended by the strange and short-sighted selection of persons placed by the Emperor at the head of various branches of the legislature, and by his rough and uncereemonious behaviour towards themselves.

One of the favourite amusements of Peter III. was to make the old and pampered courtiers of Elizavetta Petrovna's time, perform his adored Prussian drill before the Palace. All the Field Marshals, Generals, Colonels, and Majors of the Guard, whatever courtly titles they might boast of, were compelled to give the word of command at each change of guard at the Palace, and stand

before the ranks at the reviews and parades. To these new rules the Hetman, who had not the slightest knowledge of drill, and who had never taken a spontoon⁷ into his hands in his life, was also compelled to submit. In order to avoid public reprimands from the Emperor, and consequent and inevitable ridicule, he, like all his companions, kept in his house a young officer well acquainted with the drill in question, and two or three times a day took a lesson in the Prussian exercise of him. Strive as he might, however, the Hetman had to swallow constant reprimands and ironical observations, which of course deeply wounded a man who had occupied so high a place at the Court of Elizavetta Petrovna. Peter III., however, seems to have been unable to perceive the mistake he was thus making, for after scolding and laughing at the Hetman in public, he used to visit him at his house without ceremony, apparently unsuspecting how much bitterness against him was lurking in the bosom of his host.

⁷ A half pike or halberd.

This universal displeasure and murmuring against the Emperor increased still more when it became known that he intended declaring war against Denmark, in order to become possessed of a tiny patch of land which formerly belonged to the Dukes of Holstein. The army prepared itself for the march with the utmost reluctance—complaints were heard all over St. Petersburg, and dark hints were whispered among the people. All longed for a change, and involuntarily turned their eyes towards Catherine, who, by her devotion to the orthodox faith and to the interest of Russia, by her respect for the national rights and customs so ruthlessly trampled on by her husband, by her amiability and accessibility, had won all hearts in her favour. Having been subjected in public, more than once, to the rude outbursts of the Emperor, she had taken up her abode at Peterhoff^s; but in her retirement she kept a vigilant watch over the movements of the day, and the change that was taking place in public

^s An Imperial country residence near Petersburg.—
(Tr.)

opinion. She held the thread of the conspiracy, which thickened day by day, with extraordinary tact and cleverness, her principal assistants being the talented and enterprising brothers Orloff, and the clever but romantic Countess Catherine Romanovna Dashkoff⁹. The greater part of the younger members of society joined the conspirators, but the adherents of Catherine felt that for the success of their plan they must enroll on their lists persons of weight and importance in the political world. Among these the Hetman occupied the first place; he was greatly beloved by the Guards, and especially by the Ismail regiment, for his liberality and affability. To secure such a person was of the utmost importance to the party, and the task of doing so was accepted by one of the Orloffs. He accordingly came to Razoumoffsky's house in the middle of the night, and was coolly listened to by the cautious Hetman, who, having reflected for a short time,


⁹ A celebrated character of Catherine's reign. Born 1749; lady of honour, 1762; Director of the Academy of Sciences, 1782; died, 1810.

advised him to seek counsel of another person, observing, "He is wiser than either you or I;" put out the candle, and wished the unexpected guest good night. So strange an answer greatly puzzled the conspirators, but they did not lose heart—after the failure of Orloff, the Countess Dashkoff appeared on the scene; she undertook to act on Razoumoffsky's mind through two officers of the Ismail regiment, who were intimate with him; and, finally, through Teploff, who, through the unbounded confidence reposed in him by the Count, might more easily than other persons attract his patron to the interest of the Empress. Teploff became intimate with the conspirators, and permitted himself great liberty of speech concerning the Emperor. Some of his words were repeated to Peter who long had entertained a feeling of ill-will towards Teploff, and he now ordered that he should be placed under arrest, and examined with the utmost strictness. This arrest made a deep impression on the Hetman; he warmly took the part of his former teacher and faithful adviser, and contrived, though not

without great difficulty, to obtain his release. Teploff left the gates of the fortress more embittered than ever, and entered heart and soul into the conspiracy. From that time Catherine could boldly count on the assistance of Razoumoffsky.

At the time that the Hetman added himself to the list of the Empress's friends, it contained the names of many of his most intimate acquaintance, Prince Volkhonsky, Count Stroganoff, Shouvaloff, the Archbishop of Novgorod, and others. The expected departure of the Emperor to Berlin was considered as a favourable moment for action, but circumstances unexpectedly hastened the catastrophe. Owing to the thoughtless conduct of Passek, a lieutenant in the regiment of the Transfiguration, and one of Catherine's most ardent admirers, the conspiracy was discovered, and the Emperor, who was then at Oranienbaum¹, was informed of it immediately. Further delay became impossible. On the night of the 27-28th June, Catherine

¹ A village on the banks of the mouth of the Neva, about twenty miles from Petersburg.



secretly left Peterhoff, and went straight to the barracks of the Ismail regiment, where she was met by Razoumoffsky at its head; the men and officers, on being called out to the alarm, unhesitatingly took the oath of allegiance to the Empress. Accompanied by the Hetman and the regiment in question, Catherine repaired to the Kazan² Church, where the clergy, civil authorities, and the other regiments of the Guard, were hastily collected, and they also unanimously declared her their Autocrat Empress. After a special service of thanksgiving, the Empress proceeded to Oranienbaum, having previously sent Vice-Admiral Talyzin on to Cronstadt to have the oath administered to the garrison there. Peter III., on hearing of the unexpected turn of affairs, would fain have defended himself sword in hand, but when he found that he was deserted by all his adherents, he quietly gave himself up to his fate. He was arrested and confined in


² So called on account of its being dedicated to Our Lady of Kazan. It is built after the model of St. Peter's at Rome, but on a smaller scale.—(Tr.)

the Ropshnisky Palace, where he soon after died³.

The Empress rewarded her adherents munificently. Count Cyril Grigorievitch was made Senator and Adjutant-General, with an addition to his salary of 5000 roubles per annum. He remained with the Empress until June 1763. She placed the utmost confidence in him, and entrusted him with affairs of the highest importance. For instance, the secret investigation into the conspiracy of Hroostchoff and the brothers Kourieff, who intended to drive the Empress from the throne, was confided to him; and he afterwards became the presiding member of a commission established for the consideration and making of new rules for the whole army.

The Hetman returned to Little-Russia in June, 1763, but this time without his *protégé* Teploff. Catherine, acknowledging fully the abilities of this clever man, kept him at Petersburg, and appointed him her State Secretary

³ July 6th of the same year, 1762.—(Tr.)



for the receipt of petitions. On his arrival at Gloushkoff, Razoumoffsky called together a general assembly for the consideration of several serious questions concerning the public benefit. When the occupations of the assembly were drawing to a close, several Elders and Colonels expressed their wish that the Hetmanship should remain hereditary in the family of the Razoumoffskys. A petition was immediately written to the Empress in the name of all Little-Russia, in which, among others, the example of Ury Hmelnitsky was brought forward, as having been elected and confirmed as Hetman on the death of his father. This petition was the cause of disorder in the assembly, and many of the Elders hastened to leave Gloushkoff. Upon which, by the orders of the Hetman, the petition was sent to the districts and regiments with the request that such as wished to sign it should do so. The disorders and disturbance increased still more. The Governor of Kieff denounced the affair to the authorities at Petersburg, while Razoumoffsky sent a petition in his own name to the Empress,

begging for the establishment of hereditary right of Hetmanship in his family. Doubtless he counted on the services he had rendered to Catherine, on her favour towards him, and on the friendly assistance of Teploff. He had, however, to endure a bitter disappointment of his hopes. Teploff seeing that Razoumoffsky's star was about to set, betrayed his patron and went over to the side of his enemies. He kept the Empress informed of all the doings in Little-Russia, which he thoroughly knew—presenting all the dangers that threatened Russia from the ambition of the Hetman, and the disorders in the Ukraine, and succeeded in disposing her completely against Count Cyril. The result of all this was that he was recalled to St. Petersburg. On the day following his arrival he reported himself at the palace, where he was met by Teploff with open arms. Count Orloff, who witnessed this scene, said loudly to the other persons present, "He betrayed him with a kiss." The reception he met with from Catherine was the coldest possible, and hurt him to the depths of his heart.

Razoumoffsky was beloved by all, and a large party began to form among the courtiers, who loudly condemned government for ingratitude and injustice towards him. Catherine, jealous in the highest degree of every thing that regarded her authority, forbade Count Cyril to appear at court, and desired him to present a petition requesting retirement from the Hetmanship. He did not consent to this for some time, but after much persuasion and consultation, he became convinced that he could do nothing but submit, and therefore, following the advice of his friends, he presented at the end of October, 1764, the petition so impatiently waited for. On the 10th November an ukase was issued, by which the Hetmanship was abolished, and the same day appeared the nomination of Count Cyril as Field Marshal, with a grant for life of the salary of the Hetman (50,000 roubles), with the addition of 10,000 from the revenues of Little-Russia; the town of Gadyatch with its villages and hamlets; the district of Vykhoffsky, and a house at Batourine. The doors of the Palace

opened again to him, but he remained for ever on stiff terms with the Empress.

Count Cyril's self-love had received a severe stroke. He perceived plainly that his part was played, that he must resign his place to others, and retire to the background. Wounded and disappointed, he resolved to leave the Court, and in April, 1765, set forth on a tour abroad. Having visited Germany, France, England, and Italy, he remained some time at Strasburg, where his sons were being educated ; and returned to Petersburg at the end of 1767. During the time of his travels the younger brother of the Empress's favourite, Count Vladimir Orloff, was appointed President of the Academy of Sciences. His prolonged absence served to erase gradually from the Empress's heart the feeling of dislike that she had entertained towards him, and she herself made the first step towards reconciliation by appointing Count Cyril member of the Council established by herself for the consideration of the gravest affairs of government, and consisting of seven persons only. Razou-

moffsky, though he occupied his places both in Senate and Council, rarely appeared at court, and held himself aloof from all intrigues.

The year 1771 was a most sorrowful one for Count Cyril : on the 6th July, his brother Count Alexis died, and a few days afterwards his wife, the Countess Caterina Ivanovna, expired, when still in the prime of life. He inherited a vast sum of money from his brother, which doubled his already ample fortune, consisting of a hundred thousand souls of peasants, besides estates and houses.

When the Count's sons grew up, finished their education, and entered the Imperial service, he removed his residence to Moscow, but here he did not remain long—his heart turned to home. In 1791, he settled at Batourine, and devoted himself to his hobby of building, but while beautifying his estate he did not forget to perfect his farming and other branches of village economy. In 1797, he wrote to Prince Lichtenstein for some Spanish sheep, and thus became one of the founders of sheep-farming in Russia; he bought up silkworms, procured

various machines, built mills, candle manufactories, &c., &c. Tradition says that Razoumoffsky was the first to plant pyramidical poplars in Little-Russia. At the same time he was an exemplary master. "The peasants bless the memory of the late Field Marshal Razoumoffsky," wrote a traveller in 1805; "wherever I came in this part of the country (i.e. Little-Russia), I found that old and young, nobles and peasants, all, without exception, unanimously agree in praising Count Cyril Grigorievitch, and all were full of gratitude and respect towards him. The time that he passed among them they call 'The golden time!'" The remembrance of those golden times is not entirely erased even now from the minds of the former serfs of the Razoumoffskys. In 1861 when the Liberation was carried into effect, the peasants of such of the posterity of the Hetman as still possess small portions of his once enormous property, expressed the wish that all might be as it used to be in Count Cyril's time.

The reign of the Emperor Paul passed un-

clouded for Count Cyril, though a painful disease in his leg, from which he had long been a sufferer, increased considerably and rendered him almost unable to move. His physicians advised him to go to Teplitz for cure, and he determined to visit Vienna on his way, his son, Count André, being Ambassador there, and from thence to proceed to the waters. In this journey Count André ordered a carriage of peculiar construction for his father in London; it was contrived in such a manner that, by means of concealed mechanism, a bed sprang forth when required. Before the carriage was sent from London it was exhibited to the public, and the maker, it is said, realized 5000 roubles by this means only. But during the reign of Paul Petróvitch there existed a law prohibiting the bringing of foreign coaches into Russia, and consequently the permission of the Emperor was required to pass the carriage in question. It was unhesitatingly given, and when the curious equipage was landed, Paul desired that it might be brought for him to look at, and afterwards to

Paulovsk, for the Empress to see. Altogether it cost, including the expense of bringing it from London to Batourine, 18,000 roubles. Count Cyril wished to try this remarkable carriage, but it proved too heavy for its purpose, and eight horses could hardly drag it four versts at an easy trot.

After this disappointment, Razoumoffsky gave up the idea of travelling altogether. At intervals he was consoled by visits from his sons and daughters, with their children. Notwithstanding his ill-health the Count hailed the accession to the throne of the Emperor Alexander I.⁴ by an address. The Emperor replied by the following rescript:—

“Count Cyril Grigorievitch, Having served faithfully and devotedly so many sovereigns, receiving and justifying their favour, you have every right to enjoy, in the repose of your retirement, universal respect and my good will. Receive my sincere thanks for your congratulations and the wishes that accompanied them. I feel sure that the prayers of so venerable a

⁴ 1801.



man must be pleasing to Heaven, and I pray the Almighty to send you strength and health, and that the evening of your days may be filled with peaceful joy, the only true reward of good deeds that cannot be taken away. I remain, your well wisher, ALEXANDER."

But Count Cyril did not enjoy the honours of this world much longer. He became weaker every day, and died peacefully on 9th January, 1803. He was buried in the church built by himself at Batourine. His sons raised a magnificent monument over his remains in the form of a pyramid, with a marble medallion portrait of the deceased.


Count Razoumoffsky undoubtedly belongs to the number of celebrated persons of the eighteenth century. Though he occupied the highest posts of government, rendering himself deserving of the friendship and favour of several sovereigns, and governing irresponsibly so vast a district, he never forgot his humble origin, and in his soul ever remained a simple Russian man. His honours and countless riches did not turn his head; luxury and its

inseparable results did not corrupt his heart. He was good, magnanimous, bountiful, without the slightest pride or conceit, accessible to every one, affable to all ; of a lively, original turn of mind, with a slight touch of drollery. Honoured during his lifetime with universal respect, he justly carried to the grave universal regret. His clever and well-aimed speeches breathed with kindness, and never wounded any one ; his benevolence amounted to eccentricity. The anecdotes here collected ⁶ will serve better than any thing else to confirm our words, and to acquaint the reader slightly with the private character of this excellent man.

On one occasion the Emperor Peter III., who perfectly worshipped King Frederick of Prussia, and constantly fell into raptures on that subject, boasted to Razoumoffsky that the king had made him Major-General of the Prussian army.

“Your Majesty can pay him with interest,”

⁶ Several of these anecdotes are omitted here, in consequence of the impossibility of rendering into English the play of words that renders them so amusing in Russ.—(Tr.)



answered the Count. "Make him a Russian Field Marshal."

Peter III., on the occasion of his intended declaration of war with Denmark, said to Razoumoffsky, "I have chosen thee to accompany me on the march, and to command my army."

"In that case," returned he, "I must allow myself the liberty of offering some advice to your Majesty. Divide your army into two parts, so that the hinder one may drive me and my soldiers forward. Otherwise, I foresee no chance of your Majesty's enterprise being successful."

When the first war with Turkey commenced, Prince Golitzin was appointed generalissimo, though Count Cyril, as Hetman, was considered the senior officer. One of his acquaintance, with the intention of flattering him, expressed his astonishment at the appointment of a junior to such a post.


"I'll tell you the reason," answered the Count. "You see, one army will be quite enough for Golitzin to rout the Turks; but I

could not do without two, and perhaps even three."

In 1770, on the victory gained over the Turkish fleet at Chismé, the eloquent Metropolitan, Platon, pronounced an oration, remarkable for its depth and strength of thought, in the presence of the Empress and all her Court, in the Petropauloffsky Cathedral⁶. When the preacher, to the astonishment of the listeners, descended unexpectedly from the steps leading to the altar, and, approaching the tomb of Peter the Great, exclaimed, "Awake, O thou great monarch and father of our country! Rise, and behold thy beloved people!" Count Cyril, amidst the raptures and tears of the crowd, drew a smile from those around him by inquiring quietly, "Why does he want to wake him? If he gets up, we shall all be in for it!"

Razoumoffsky kept open house and table (as we have before informed our readers), and guests, invited and uninvited, could always profit by the latter. This privilege was enjoyed

⁶ The burial place of the Imperial family since the time of Peter the Great.—(Tr.)



by a poor officer, who was living in Petersburg, in consequence of a law-suit, without any means of subsistence. He dined every day at the Count's table, and, having become accustomed to the easy rules of the house, he wandered one day after dinner into one of the interior apartments, where Count Cyril was playing at chess, as was his wont, with one of his friends. He made a mistake in one of his moves, which caused the officer to utter involuntarily an interjection of astonishment. The Count stopped in his game, and asked him to explain where the error was. The confused officer pointed it out to him, and from that time, whenever the Count sat down to play at chess, he used to ask, "And where is my teacher?" But one day the teacher was missing at table, and Count Cyril desired that inquiries should be made concerning him. With great difficulty the whereabouts of the uninvited guest was discovered, and it turned out that the poor man was ill, and in desperate circumstances. Razoumoffsky sent his physician to him, kept him supplied with medicine

and provisions, and on his recovery helped him to gain his law-suit, and in a pecuniary manner also.

The butler once informed the Count that one of the guests was strongly suspected of having stolen six silver forks and spoons.

"Then find out where he lives, and send him six more, so that he may have the full dozen!" said the Count.

The Count's niece, Countess Sophia Apraxin, who kept house for him during the latter part of his life, begged him several times to reduce the number of his servants, whose united wages amounted to upwards of 2000 roubles per month, and at last presented him with two lists—one of the servants that were really necessary, and the other of those who were superfluous. Razoumoffsky signed the first, and, putting the other aside, said to his niece—

"I agree with you that I can do without these people; but first ask them if they can do without me. If they wish to part with me, I will not object to part with them."

One of the Count's stewards, a serf, began a

law-suit on his master's account with a neighbour, a poor landed proprietor. It need hardly be said that Razoumoffsky gained the suit, and the proprietor's little estate was taken from him. On hearing of it, Count Cyril ordered that it should be returned, and, in addition to it, he made the proprietor a present of the village to which the serf-steward belonged. In a few days, however, considering him sufficiently punished, the Count begged the new owner to grant him his liberty.

On another occasion a similar thing happened. The Count's agent contrived to deprive a needy proprietor of his only estate, represented him as a most turbulent character, and requested his patron to give him such a reception "that he would not be able to stand on his feet."

The proprietor came to complain to Razoumoffsky of the treatment he had received from the agent, and even shed tears. "How much is your estate worth?" asked the Count.

"Seven thousand roubles."

"Well, I will give orders immediately for you to receive 15,000."

The astonished proprietor fell on his knees.

"Look!" said Count Cyril to his agent, "I have done as you wished. He is not able to stand on his feet."

Once upon a time the steward, with a disturbed countenance, came to inform the Count that several hundred of his serfs had run away to New Russia.

"What ingratitude!" exclaimed the steward. "Your Radiancy is truly the father of your serfs."

"The daddy is a good fellow enough," agreed the Count, "but Mother Liberty is a thousand times better than he. They are wise fellows, those serfs. I should have done the same in their place."

He once met a runaway servant, and quietly said to him, "Go home, brother."

The man obeyed; and when the Count, on his return home, was asked what punishment should be inflicted on the runaway, he answered, "What for? I myself caught him."

After receiving the title of Hetman, he visited Kieff. The prefect of the Ecclesiastical Aca-

demy, Kozatchinsky, presented him with a volume, splendidly bound and gilt, containing a fantastic genealogy, by which the family of the Hetman was shown to have descended from the celebrated and ancient house of Rojnitsky, of Poland.

"What's this?" asked Cyril Grigorievitch.

"The pedigree of your Radiancy," replied Kozatchinsky, bowing low.

"My pedigree? How on earth did it become so long?" said the Count, in astonishment, as he turned the book in his hands.

"The family of your Radiancy proceeds from that of the Rojnitskys."

"Bah! bah! what tales are these that you are telling me, respected father," said he, with a smile. "My pedigree is a very short one. My father, brave and honest man, was but a simple Kozack, and my mother, the daughter of a peasant, also a good and honest man. And I, by the grace and bounty of her Imperial Majesty, am a Count and the Hetman of Little-Russia, with the rank of field-marshal. That is the whole of my pedigree. It is short


certainly, but I desire no other, because I love the truth more than any thing else. Good day, respected father."

With these words he turned his back on the confused monk.

In Count Cyril's handsome cabinet, in an elegantly carved rosewood cupboard, were preserved with religious care, the shepherd's pipe and rustic dress that he wore in his youth at Lemeshy. Whenever his children, forgetting themselves, made any pretension to aristocracy, or behaved proudly to their inferiors, their father used immediately to desire the servant to open the cupboard, saying, "Let's have a look at my moojik's coat! the one I had on when they took me from our village to Petersburg. I should like to think about the times when I used to herd oxen and cry 'tsop! tsop!' to them."

Count Cyril had six sons—Alexis, Peter, André, Leff (Leo), Ivan, and Gregory; and four daughters—Natalia, Elizavetta, Anna, and

⁷ Sound of encouragement to the oxen, used by drovers and herdsmen.—(Tr).




Apollinaria, all of whom married into high families. Not one of the sons, however, left posterity, except Gregory, whose marriage abroad was not acknowledged by the Holy Synod governing. His children still reside in Austria, and bear the title of Counts Razoumoffsky.

CHAPTER III.

BIRON'S¹ DAUGHTER.

HEDWIGA-ELIZABETH BIRON was born 23rd June, 1727, at Mittau. Her father, Ernst-Johann Biron, subsequently Duke of Courland and Semigal, was of humble extraction, his grandfather having been hostler at the court of James, Duke of Courland, while his father served as outrider to the Duke's son Alexander, after the death of whom, in 1686, he was promoted to be forester. Ernst-Johann (born 1690), the second of three sons, was educated in the University of Königsberg; but, having been

¹ Biron, or more properly Büren, was a favourite of the Empress Anna Ivanovna; he was extremely ambitious, and, if possible, still more cruel.



concerned in a disagreeable history, was compelled to make his escape from thence without finishing the course of study, and became secretary to a landed proprietor in Lithuania. In 1714 Ernst Biron went to Russia, in the hopes of finding an appointment at the court of the consort of Alexis Petrovitch²; but, on meeting with a decided refusal, he returned to Courland. At that time Anna Ivanovna, a Russian Tzarevna, widow of the hereditary Duke of Courland, still lived there as Duchess, and the principal person at her court was M. P. Bestoujeff-Rumin, head-marshal. Biron contrived to insinuate himself into the favour of Bestoujeff, and through him obtained access to the Duchess's court. Biron's youth and handsome person attracted the attention of Anna Ivanovna, who took the ex-student of Königsberg under her protection, and nominated him under-chamberlain. This nomination wounded the pride of the haughty Courland aristocracy to such a degree that two of them, Keyserling and Fitinhoff, also under-chamberlains to the

² Son of Peter the Great.

- Duchess, retired from her service. Gifted with a sharp and ready wit, eloquence, and excessive ambition, Biron soon won the unbounded confidence of the Duchess, and got her completely under his influence. Bestoujeff, calumniated by him, was forced to quit Courland in 1718, and the
- young favourite became the absolute disposer of all the affairs of the Duchess. In order to secure means for the future, Biron endeavoured to connect himself, through an advantageous marriage, with the nobility of Courland, to which he did not belong, and which availed itself of every opportunity to show him the utmost contempt. After a long list of unsuccessful suits, Biron, with the assistance of the Duchess, married, in 1723, a maid of honour, Benigna-Gottlieb Trotta von Treiden, a person no longer young, of very plain appearance, and afflicted with a chronic complaint, which, however, did not prevent her living to a great age. Of this marriage Biron had, besides the daughter above mentioned, two sons—Peter (born 1724) and Carl (born 1728).

When Hedwiga-Elizabeth was of an age to

understand her station in life, her father was a count, high chamberlain, and irresponsible manager of a vast empire under the name of Anna Ivanovna, who had been chosen, in 1730, to fill the throne of Russia. Occupied as he was with affairs of state and court intrigues, Biron was unable to enter into the details of his children's education, and left that responsibility entirely to his wife. Benigna-Gottlieb, herself mediocre, morose, and haughty, had received a very inferior education. However, she fully acknowledged the necessity of a good one, and spared no expense in order to render her children worthy of the future that awaited them. She sent abroad for a very phalanx of tutors and governesses, who taught them, in addition to several foreign languages, every branch of knowledge and science that would be required by persons likely to fill important offices of state. The Empress, who loved Biron's children as dearly as if they were her own, took the warmest interest in their education; she frequently visited their school-rooms, attentively watching their progress,

and not unfrequently hearing their lessons herself.

Biron's sons were spoiled and stupid boys ; they learned lazily, and from their earliest youth manifested evil propensities, which increased with years, and from the spoiling and over-indulgence of the Empress and their parents. The favourite diversion of these tiresome children was to pour ink or wine over the elegant costumes of the nobles who attended court, and in pulling their wigs off. Once upon a time the nine-years-old Carl, who was running in the grand salle of the palace with a whip in his hand, slashed the legs of the assembled courtiers without ceremony, and, among others, he severely hurt the aged and venerable Prince T. F. Bariatinsky, general-in-chief. At that moment Biron entered the salle, and Bariatinsky, irritated at the boy's conduct, complained of it to the father, remarking that if it were repeated attendance at court would become impossible. Biron reddened, and, casting a contemptuous glance over Bariatinsky from head to foot, answered him sternly, "If you are displeased,


you can offer your resignation ; I warrant that it will be accepted." On another occasion Carl, while wandering through the palace hot-houses, over-ate himself, notwithstanding the entreaties and prohibition of Schwarz, his tutor, with green plums, and became extremely ill. The Empress, who doted in particular on this child, was so enraged with Schwarz that she condemned him, without listening to his explanations, to jail, where he remained among criminals for a whole month, when she ordered him to be banished from the empire. A similar fate befell the court maître d'hotel, Kirsch, who, offended by the ridicule and spiteful tricks of the young Biron, dared to address a few free words to them.

Hedwiga-Elizabeth did not resemble her brothers. She was not handsome, had a bad figure, small stature, and a small hump on her back ; but, in amends for these disadvantages, nature blessed her with beautiful and expressive eyes, a cunning and insinuating disposition, a firm character, and a most wonderful memory. The ardour with which she applied herself to

study, and the interest she manifested in its most serious branches, astonished all her teachers. Notwithstanding, according to the opinion of her parents, Hedwiga-Elizabeth's rare talents did not make up for her want of beauty, which distressed her father, in particular, very much. He never spoke of her but in terms of contemptuous pity, and worried her with upbraidings and undeserved censures. Such conduct on the part of her father deeply wounded the little girl's self-love. Wounded pride and the consciousness of her own mental superiority combined to concentrate her in herself, to produce closeness, selfishness, and a strong inclination for independence, which she attained, as we shall presently see, in a very original manner.

In 1737 Biron was created Duke of Courland, and his daughter received the title of Princess and a suite of her own, consisting of several maids of honour, a gentleman in waiting, and a few pages. On the 3rd June, 1739, the wedding day of the Empress's niece, the Princess of Mecklenburg, Anna Leopoldovna, and Prince

Anton-Ulrich of Brunswick, Hedwiga-Elizabeth made her first appearance at court. She arrived in a splendid gilt coach, attended by a brilliant and numerous suite, and during the whole time the marriage-ceremony was being performed she stood by the Empress's side. At the state dinner given at the palace she sat at the same table as the bride and bridegroom, and in the evening directed the dances at a masquerade that took place in the grand saloon of the palace. Hedwiga-Elizabeth's entrance into society was quite a success; she pleased every one by her cleverness, her merry disposition, and her worldly tact. The Empress was extremely pleased with the manners of the young Princess, and expressed her approbation several times to her in the kindest manner. From that time Hedwiga-Elizabeth became a constant attendant at all the court solemnities, and although she was still a child—and a plain child too—the flower of the aristocracy began to gather around her. In the hopes of gaining favour in the opinion of the all-powerful Duke, the nobles rivalled each other in showing his



daughter the most slavish attention. Court life was very much to the taste of Hedwiga-Elizabeth, and she devoted herself to it with all the ardour natural at her age. Enjoying as she did but little happiness in her father's house, the young Princess found consolation at the court assemblies only, where the devotion and compliments of the young men flattered herself-love, and where the severe despotism of the Duke could not reach her. On the 14th February, 1740, the conclusion of peace with Turkey was celebrated in a particularly solemn manner, and among the persons who received rewards on this occasion was Hedwiga-Elizabeth. The Empress, in the presence of the assembled courtiers, pinned with her own hand to the bosom of the young girl her portrait, studded with brilliants.

Although Hedwiga-Elizabeth was only in her thirteenth year at the time we are speaking of, the Empress was on the look-out for a suitable match for her among the reigning princes of Germany, and the rich dowry that she promised to give the bride caused several foreign princes

to seek her hand. The Prince of Saxe-Meiningen was particularly urgent in his suit, but he received a refusal, on account of his bad reputation and heavy debts. Peter the Great's son-in-law, Frederick Charles, Duke of Holstein, who was in extremely reduced circumstances, begged Biron to be go-between, in the obtaining a gift of a hundred thousand roubles, between himself and the Court of Russia, and at the same time offered to arrange a marriage between Biron's daughter and his own youthful son, who in time became Emperor of Russia, under the name of Peter III. Biron thought a connexion with the house of Holstein very flattering to himself, showed the Duke's letter to the Empress, and asked her opinion on the subject. Anna Ivanovna, who detested Frederick Charles, tore up his letter in extreme vexation, threw the fragments into the fire, and exclaimed, "That drunkard is mistaken in imagining that he can wheedle me into giving him money by such an offer. He will get nothing but contempt from me." She much wished to bestow Hedwiga-Elizabeth in mar-

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to conduct both ladies back to their rooms, and to keep guard over them. The Princess, overwhelmed with fright at these unexpected proceedings, passed the rest of the night with her mother in a state of the most painful uncertainty, alarm, and despair. As soon as day dawned a court *employé* waited on them, politely requested them to give him the keys of all the boxes and chests of drawers, and then, seating them in a close *dormeuse*, on the coachman's seat of which were two agents of police, desired that they should be taken to the monastery of S. Alexandre Neffsky³. Here, in the Archimandrite's cell, they found Biron and his younger son; the eldest, who was ill, was left at Petersburg. On the same day Biron and his family were removed, by order of the Emperor's mother, the Princess Anna Leopoldovna, now declared Regentess, to the fortress of Schlüsselburg⁴.

³ A few versts from St. Petersburg: the remains of the great Russian King and Saint, Alexandre, repose here. Died 1264.—(Tr.)

⁴ Situated on an island in the Lake of Ladoga.—(Tr.)

Hedwiga-Elizabeth remained with her father in this fortress for about six months, during which time the trial of the Duke continued. In July, 1741, it came to a conclusion. The Senate sentenced Biron, for various "godless and mal-intended" actions, to death, but the Regentess commuted this sentence to exile to a town in Siberia called Pelym, which was upwards of three thousand versts distance from St. Petersburg. Orders were given for the building of a small house and premises for the ducal family, and of a high paling to surround them. The exterior plan of the house, and that of its frontage, and its four rooms, were sketched by Field-Marshal Minich, who little thought then that that very place would be *his* prison for twenty years.

The Biron family travelled to Pelym under the escort of Lt. Captains Vikentieff and Dournovo and twenty soldiers from different regiments. In the instructions which were given to the officers from the Cabinet, they were ordered to keep the Duke under "strict and careful guard, and constantly to have in view the prevention

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him her own physician, Lestocq, who not only assisted the sufferer materially by his art, but on his return to court begged for several ameliorations of his fate. The Empress permitted the Biron's to receive any persons that they wished to see, to go visiting, and to shoot or hunt, but at a distance from the city of Yaroslavl not greater than twenty versts round, and with "a proper and honourable" surveillance, i. e. accompanied by an officer to guard them. Besides this, the Empress ordered that Biron's library, furniture, household utensils, hunting-dogs, guns, and several horses, which were left behind at St. Petersburg, should be sent to him.

Thus, thanks to the indulgence of Elizavetta Petrovna, the Duke's family enjoyed a certain degree of liberty and comfort at Yaroslavl; but, notwithstanding, both Biron and his family were very ill satisfied with their fate. They complained of the insufficiency of their allowance, of the painful dependence that they laboured under from the officer on guard over them. They quarrelled with him incessantly,

and thereby endured still greater disagreeables.

Hedwiga-Elizabeth was the most discontented of them all. Torn from the brilliant circle at court, in which were centered all her thoughts and desires, she suffered agonies of ennui and considered herself the most unfortunate creature on earth. The grief and vexation that wrung her heart were aggravated still more by the constant worryings of the Duke. He was extremely irritable and hasty. The slightest failure or disagreeable enraged him, and he generally wreaked all his anger on his belongings, his ill-loved daughter receiving an undue share on such occasions. From the first day of her arrival at Yaroslavl, Hedwiga-Elizabeth set her head to work to devise a plan by which she might free herself from the paternal yoke and join the court once more. First and foremost were her endeavours to incline persons of influence in her favour, hoping through their patronage and connexions to obtain her ends; but she soon became convinced of the futility of such hopes, and tried

another plan—she wrote a letter to the Director of Secret Police, Count Shouvaloff, and begged him to take pity on her unfortunate situation. When this even produced no results, she resolved on a desperate step—to run away from her father's house. A favourable opportunity did not present itself, however, sooner than in the year 1749, when the Empress, with all her Court, removed to Moscow, and in the month of April undertook a pilgrimage on foot to the Trinity Monastery. On hearing that her Imperial Majesty would be at a distance of a hundred and fifty versts only from Yaroslavl, Hedwiga-Elizabeth hastened to carry her plan into effect. On the 15th of April she waited on the wife of the Commandant of Yaroslavl, Madame Bobristcheff-Poushkine, and with showers of tears explained to her that she had long felt a longing to embrace the Orthodox faith, but that her father, who opposed this wish, persecuted her in the most cruel manner; and that she could endure it no longer. She further implored Madame Poushkine to accompany her to the Trinity Monastery without

delay, in order that she might personally beg the Empress' protection and patronage. Madame Poushchine rejoiced at an opportunity of making herself known to the Empress, and set out that very night to the Monastery with Hedwiga-Elizabeth.

On their arrival, Madame Poushchine presented the Princess to the Countess Shouvaloff, who occupied the place of first lady-in-waiting. Hedwiga-Elizabeth contrived to insinuate herself into the favour of the old lady and to excite so deep an interest in her for herself that the Countess undertook to manage the affair with the Empress. Thanks to this patronage, the Princess was represented to her Imperial Majesty as the unfortunate victim of parental severity, brought on by her reverence for the Orthodox Russian faith. Elizavetta Petrovna, as is well known, was extremely religious, and devoted to the Church, and the conduct of the Princess met with her full approbation. She considered it her sacred duty to take the "poor sheep" under her protection, and desired that she should be brought before her. On finding

herself in the presence of the Empress, Hedwiga-Elizabeth fell on her knees, burst into a fit of sobbing, and was unable to utter a word. Elizavetta Petrovna was touched; she behaved in the most caressing way to her, and promised to stand godmother to her immediately on her return to Moscow. And three weeks later, Hedwiga-Elizabeth was indeed solemnly admitted into the Greco-Russian Church by the name of Katerina Ivanovna ⁵.

The adventures of the Princess of Courland interested the Court in the highest degree; all regarded her as an unhappy orphan, without protection and liaisons, and endeavoured by their attentions and kindness to testify their sympathy in her situation. Katerina Ivanovna, with the tact that was natural to her, profited to the utmost by the favourable feeling of the Court. She insinuated herself into the confidence of the Empress's spiritual father, became


⁵ On embracing the Greco-Russian religion, *baptized* persons frequently receive Unction under a new name, especially if their original name be not among those of the Saints in the Calendar.—(Tr.)

quite at home with Countess Shouvaloff, conducting herself with great modesty, saying a kind word to all who spoke to her, and by her wit entirely destroying the not altogether pleasant impression that her person might produce.

As the Princess had no means of existence whatever, an appointment was invented for her—namely, that of Second Inspectress to the Maids of Honour, which however brought but a very limited salary. The Senior Inspectress was a Madame Schmit, by birth a Fin, and remarkable for her excessive corpulence and gruff masculine voice. She played a certain part with regard to the Empress, and was under the immediate patronage of the old Germans and Swedes who served as ladies-in-waiting. Madame Schmit was entrusted with the home-life and conduct of the maids of honour, treated them with great strictness and never appeared at court; in public the Princess of Courland was placed at their head by Madame Schmit, who gave her secret instructions to watch their behaviour in company. That part of the palace

which was occupied by the maids of honour consisted of a long suite of rooms bounded on either side by the apartments of Madame Schmit and of the Princess. According to this arrangement, the young ladies would seem to be perfectly inaccessible, as a visit to their rooms could not be accomplished without passing through those of Madame Schmit or of the Princess; but the former frequently suffered from fits of indigestion caused by the quantity of rich pies and other good things which the parents of her charges sent her; and thus the only communication with the apartments of the maids of honour was through those of the Princess, and spiteful tongues whispered that she took bribes for permission to pass. This may be an idle invention, but no doubt whatever exists that she had an extraordinary influence over the maids of honour, and during the course of several years arranged their marriages according to her own pleasure.

Among the patrons of the princess one of the most obliging was Chamberlain Tchogloloff, steward of the household to the Grand Duke



Pëtre Feodorovitch, the former pretender to the hand of the Princess, and now heir to the Russian throne. Tchoglokoff considered himself indebted to the Biron family, the eldest son having assisted him at the commencement of his career by taking him from the military academy and getting him into the horse-guards, besides keeping him about his own person as a sort of adjutant. Through Tchoglokoff the Princess gained admission to the intimate circle of the Grand Duke, and very soon completely won his heart. In the eyes of Pëtre, Katerina Ivanovna possessed an extremely rare advantage over others; she was a princess, and, above all, a German princess⁶. He never spoke to her but in German, and showered all possible favours on her. He used to send her viands and wine from his own table when she dined at home, consulted her about the intended alterations in the regimental uniforms of his Holstein soldiers, and at last became so attached to the


⁶ The Grand Duke doted on every thing and every one that was German, and perfectly worshipped King Frederick of Prussia.—(Tr.)

cunning humpback that he could not leave her side, and if she was prevented by indisposition from attending his *soirées*, he became quite in despair. Such conduct on the part of Pëtre wounded, of course, the feelings of his consort, the Grand Duchess Catherina Alexéevna, and, in order to wean the Grand Duke from the object of his passion, she thought the best way would be to get her married. The lady-in-waiting and friend of the Grand Duchess, Madame Vladislavoff, found a bridegroom for her—the chamberlain, Pëtre Saltykoff, a middle-aged man, stupid, with the most unintellectual physiognomy, a flat nose, and ever-open mouth. His mother was a great favourite with the Empress, on account of the assistance she lent her on her accession to the throne, and Madame Vladislavoff, who was on intimate terms with her, put the notion into her head of marrying her son to the Princess. Connexion with the family of the Duke flattered the vanity of the old lady, and by her commands Pëtre Saltykoff went to the Empress, threw himself at her feet, confessed his ardent

love for the Princess, and begged for her Majesty's consent to the marriage. Elizavetta Petrovna sent for the Princess, and advised her not to refuse so good an offer. Katerina Ivanovna dared not oppose the Empress's wish, and declared herself willing to fulfil it. Fortunately for her, the Empress shortly afterwards fell ill, and the wedding was deferred for a few weeks. Katerina Ivanovna lost no time, and succeeded in teasing and disgusting her betrothed to such a degree that he himself broke off the engagement, and neither the threats of his mother nor the intrigues of Madame Vladislavoff could alter his determination. In spite of all, he immediately made an offer to Princess Solntzoff, and married her. The Empress was extremely displeased at Saltykoff's conduct, and, supposing that the Princess was hurt by the faithlessness of her betrothed, she herself set about seeking another—Prince Gregory Hovansky. However, this marriage was also given up. Hovansky disliked the Princess quite as much as she did Saltykoff, and subsequently, under various pleas, he contrived to

free himself from his bride and to join the army. This disappointment did not cool the ardour of the Empress in her desire to establish the Princess, and soon a third bridegroom was found—Baron Alexandre Ivanovitch Tcherkassoff, whom Katerina Ivanovna finally espoused in 1759.

Tcherkassoff was an extremely clever man. A sybarite by nature and habit, he astonished all by his universal knowledge. He spoke freely the English, French, and German languages, and was remarkable for his uncommon evenness of temper and inexhaustible merriment. He became subsequently one of the Empress Catherine's intimates, her partner at cards and conversation. Many was the time that Catherine had proofs of his devotion to her, and of his faculty of getting out of difficulties with honour. She never called him otherwise than "Monsieur le Baron," or, still more frequently, "Thomas Diaphorus" (probably on account of his corpulence), and even when consulting with him on serious subjects, she could not refrain from jokes and a certain friendly



familiarity with him. His almost only weakness was a passion for good wine and pretty women, but this weakness was universal with all the courtiers of that day.

Although Tcherkassoff, in his marriage with the plain Princess of Courland, was guided, above all, by the wish to please the Empress, and by this means to gain success in his future career, his union with Katerina Ivanovna was happy enough. Though he felt no tender love towards his wife, he valued her sound sense and brilliant education. Katerina Ivanovna, in her turn, attached herself heartily to her husband, did not persecute him with jealousy, and cleverly avoided all that might lead to domestic squabbles. The pair lived thus, for more than thirty-five years, without bitterness or discontents. From the day of her marriage Katerina Ivanovna began to appear more and more rarely at court, and devoted her time exclusively to the education of her children, of whom she had two—a son, Peter, and a daughter, Elizavetta, who subsequently married Colonel Palmenback.

Katerina Ivanovna lived to a good old age,

dying about 1796. Her embalmed body rests by the side of those of her father and brothers in the family vault of the Dukes of Courland in the castle of Mittau.

CHAPTER IV.

CATHERINE THE GREAT.

ABOUT the year 1740 the Princess Johanna Louisa of Anhalt-Zerbst, came on a visit to the Duchess of Brunswick with her little daughter. Several ecclesiastics were also the guests of the Duchess, and among them a canon of the house of Mengden, who was celebrated for his faculty of foretelling events. The mother of the Princess Marianna Bevern, who was in the Duchess's house at the time, begged him to inform her what fate awaited her daughter: did a crown await her in the future? The canon refused to say any thing concerning Marianna, but, turning to the mother of her little playmate, the Princess of Anhalt-Zerbst,

he said, "I see crowns on your daughter's brow, three at least." The Princess took this for a joke, and, indeed, there was very little to favour the idea that the young Sophia Augusta, or, as her mother called her, Phika, would ever occupy a throne. Her father, a prince of the house of Anhalt-Zerbst (Zerbst being the Germanized corruption of the Slavonian town Serbsk), was a general in the Prussian service, and at the time of Sophia's birth occupied the appointment of Governor of Stettin.

Sophia was born 2nd May, 1729, and was five years old when her father began to govern Anhalt-Zerbst. No one could have supposed, when she was being educated by her French governess, Hardel, that such a destiny as hers awaited her. Sophia's mother was only sixteen years old at the time of her daughter's birth. Of the same age as Frederick II., and a great favourite of his, endowed with splendid abilities, and knowing Racine and Corneille by heart, Sophia's mother could not be called a good mother, in the accepted sense of the term. She was hot-tempered, capricious, too often

harsh towards her daughter, and beat her even when she was quite past childhood. Having observed symptoms of what appeared to her pride, in the little Phika, the Princess compelled her to play with the children of the Stettin townsmen: Johanna Louisa could not count on love from her daughter.

In 1739, the ten years old Sophia Augusta paid a visit to Eiten. Here she met with her third cousin, the twelve years old Peter Frederick¹, a shy lad, who shunned society. Soon after this meeting she visited Brunswick, as we have already seen.

What reason had Canon Mengden for prophesying that Sophia would wear three crowns? Among the maids of honour at the Russian Empress's court there was a relation of his. Perhaps Mengden received secret information through her that the Empress was not opposed to the union of the heir to her throne and the daughter of her former lover's sister. Sophia's mother was the sister of Prince Lübsky, the

¹ Subsequently Peter III., Emperor of Russia. He was grandson, on the mother's side to Peter the Great.

deceased betrothed of Elizavetta Petrovna, who cherished the tenderest remembrance of him, and who could not but know that Johanna Louisa had a daughter. It was imperative to marry the heir to the throne, and it is more than probable that the Empress did not forget the young Princess of Anhalt-Zerbst. If the Mengdens at Petersburg did indeed inform the Canon of this plan, it was no stretch of the imagination if he foretold Sophia Augusta three crowns, viz. of Moscow, Kazan, and Astrakhan. Sophia herself, when she had become Catherine II., spoke of this prophecy as concurring with the time when people began to talk of the heir's soon requiring a suitable consort.

Frederick II. also, on his part, did what he could to bring about the union of Sophia Augusta with Peter Frederick. He says, in his Memoirs, that it was an affair of tactics and of state prevision ; as Prussia, in his opinion, was in danger from the barbarians of Russia, and therefore was compelled to seek their good will. Frederick was particularly in dread of the Cozacks and Tartars, who plundered all the

neighbouring country where they happened to live. Prussia, too, in the event of war with Russia, was in danger of sustaining severe loss, which, on account of the enormous extent and comparatively small population of Russia, she would be unable to revenge, particularly as she had no fleet to frighten Petersburg with, and Frederick foresaw that the future kings of Prussia must endeavour to be on good terms with Russia. But how was this to be managed? He determined to effect it by means of marriage; by bestowing a Princess from a family with friendly feelings towards Prussia on the heir to the throne of Russia. As he did not intend to give away a relative of his own, his choice fell on the daughter of his former playmate. He calculated that a Princess of Anhalt-Zerbst, educated as she had been in Prussia, must bear a feeling of good will towards her from gratitude alone. Frederick was correct in his calculations; had he not bestirred himself in the arrangement of Sophia Augusta's marriage, in all probability Prussia would never have received the extensive and better

part of Poland that afterwards fell to her share.


The King instructs his ambassador at St. Petersburg, Mardefeld, to arrange the desired union. The affair took a favourable turn, for, as we have already seen, the Empress Elizabeth had reasons for being disposed to the plan, and she sent a letter to Sophia Augusta's mother with an invitation to St. Petersburg. Such an epistle was entirely unexpected, and the little town of Anhalt-Zerbst became much excited by the arrival of a Russian estafette. Shortly afterwards Sophia's mother received a letter from Frederick, informing her that a sum of money had already been assigned by the Court of Russia for the expenses of the journey : ten thousand roubles to reach St. Petersburg, and a thousand ducats on her arrival there, in order to proceed to Moscow. The tone of the letter, and the fact that the money was placed in the hands of the Prussian embassy at St. Petersburg, combined to prove that means for this journey were provided by Frederick himself, and many authors are of the opinion that the Princess

borrowed this money from the King of Prussia. Frederick advised her not to say any thing about the journey to her husband, but to travel, as it were, to Stettin only, and from thence to St. Petersburg. The King supposed that Sophia's father, as a staunch Protestant, would never consent to his daughter's renouncing her religion and embracing another, and that he would at once put a stop to Frederick's plans. The Princess, however, replied that she could not but let her consort into the secret. The alarm on the Prince's account was entirely unfounded ; he consented readily to the journey. The Princess procured a passport for herself, under the name of Countess Reinbusch, from the Prussian King, and with it she passed through his dominions.

The Princess Sophia, with her mother and a Mademoiselle Schenk, set out accordingly for Russia. At Riga they were met with salutes from cannon. As the Court was at Moscow, they remained at Petersburg three days only. Four maids of honour were assigned to them, among whom was Mademoiselle Mengden, and

they were shown the remarkable features of the city. Chamberlain Naryshkin was sent from Moscow to meet them. The Empress greeted them with affection, but the selfish and small-minded disposition of the Princess's mother soon disgusted her. Sophia Augusta, now fifteen years old, ran through the damp and unwholesome palace of the Kremlin nearly bare-foot on one occasion, in search of a book, and became seriously ill. Her mother lowered herself still more in the opinion of the Empress by her begging that a Protestant minister might be brought to her daughter when in danger, although the patient was prepared for communion with the Greco-Russian Church, and on the contrary, begged that Simion Todorsky, an orthodox Priest, might be sent to her. This delighted the Empress, who had shown marks of her favour to the young Princess from the first day of her arrival.

Both mother and daughter, soon after their arrival, had the Order of St. Catherine conferred on them. Elizavetta did not long hesitate in her choice of a bride for her heir. During



Sophia's illness, she herself carefully attended her, and while the patient's mother scolded her for the groans that she could not repress, the Empress anxiously lent her aid at the bleedings and other means used towards recovery. To the care of Elizavetta the sick girl owed her life, for she it was who insisted on no less than sixteen bleedings—sometimes four times a day. But at last she began to amend, and on 28th June, 1744, the betrothal of the Princess Sophia-Augusta, now called Katerina Alexéevna, and already united to the orthodox Church of Russia, with the Grand Duke Pëtre Feodorovitch, took place. When on the point of receiving the holy sacrament, Catherine, as we must now call her, repeated the Creed in Russ very passably, to the delight of the Empress. Previous to this she had passed whole nights over the tasks set her by her Russian teacher Adadouff, and the Empress, on conversing with her in Russ, praised her pronunciation. The letters, however, that Catherine wrote to Elizavetta, though traced by her own hand, were composed by Adadouff.

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Soon after his betrothal, Pëtre Feodorovitch took the small pox, and although the disease left frightful traces, Catherine met her bridegroom on his recovery with expressions of unaltered attachment. Was this a mask, we ask ? Pëtre was good-looking before his sickness, and if his eyes did not express very great intellect, they shone with liveliness and candour. But the small pox made fearful ravages on his young face ; he was completely altered, and his former good looks were lost for ever.


We may say for certain that Catherine's marriage was one of convenience. On the part of Pëtre Feodorovitch there was more candour than love. What pleased him more than any thing, as he himself confessed to his bride, was that she was his cousin, and that consequently he could talk to her candidly about his love affairs². For instance, he confessed to her his attachment to Mademoiselle Lopoukhine, and Catherine behaved in such a manner that she became the confidante of her bridegroom and

² The Grand Duke was seventeen years old at the time of his betrothal.—(Tr.)

subsequently of her husband, and in a degree his Mentor. Fifteen days after his marriage, Pëtre confessed to his wife his love for Mademoiselle Carr. Subsequently Pëtre Feodorovitch's attention was drawn to Mademoiselle Biron, the daughter of the banished Duke of Courland³. Small of stature and humpbacked, but with beautiful eyes, clever and intriguing, she enraptured the Grand Duke because he could talk exclusively in German with her, for he disliked the Russian language and Russian customs in general. Catherine knew of all these platonic attachments on the part of her consort and was a cold looker-on of it the whole time. Her only consolation in her married life was books. When, at Hamburg, Hillenburgh told her mother that Sophia Augusta's mind was very highly developed for her age; and the same person advised Catherine at St. Petersburg to read more; recommended her the "Lives of Plutarch," the "Life of Cicero," "Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire." These

³ See "Biron's Daughter," Chapter III.


books were procured with difficulty at Petersburg. Having perused Catherine's composition, "Portrait of a philosopher of fifteen years old," Hellenburgh added to it twelve pages of his own comments. This production of Catherine's early youth was burnt by her with the rest of her papers in 1758, when she had reason to fear the Arguses that surrounded her. So strong was the thirst for knowledge in Catherine, that she read, volume after volume, the copious French Lexicon of Beil, at the rate of one volume in the course of six months. At this early time even Catherine's head was occupied with questions concerning comparative philology, which caused her to ask the assistance of the Chaplain of the English Factory, Mr. Dumaresque. The perusal of Tacet's Chronicle produced, she relates, a complete change in her ideas. In a word, she studied, and studied diligently too. She took particular pains to acquaint herself with Russia and Russian life. For this purpose she became acquainted with Chancellor Bestoujeff, and conversed frequently with him. He was a deceitful person, and a corrupt



minister—so corrupt, that Frederick II. used to say that he would have sold the Empress Elizavetta could he have found a purchaser for her—but at the same time an extremely clever, intelligent, and, for the time in which he lived, cultivated person. Had Catherine intended to prepare herself for the business of governing, she could not have employed her time more profitably. But who knows?—perhaps she prepared herself intentionally. She herself confessed, that before ever she saw Elizavetta Petrovna, and when on her road to St. Petersburg, where an undefined future awaited her, she felt a sort of presentiment that she would be eventually the autocratic Empress of that immense tract over which her travelling carriage was now rolling. This presentiment did not leave her in aftertimes. The style of life that surrounded her subsequently could not but keep the notion up. “Mengden’s prophecy is being fulfilled,” said her mother at St. Petersburg; and day by day the daughter became convinced that it might be realized more fully than ever was expected.

Possessed of a penetrative and subtile mind, Catherine saw and understood all the emptiness, all the weak side of the world she lived in, and from the very first she played a part—"tacked about." The pious Elizavetta begged her to fast during the second week of Lent ; Catherine expressed a wish that she might be allowed to fast during the whole of Lent, although she ran the risk of thereby incurring the displeasure of the Grand Duke. We have already seen the fifteen years old philosopher imploring for the consolation of an orthodox priest.

The Empress had a high opinion of her own personal appearance. In her times, when ladies dressed like gentlemen, and gentlemen as ladies, at the Court masquerades, her fine figure and stately stature could not but attract attention. On one of these occasions, immediately after a dance in which Elizavetta—one of the best dancers of the day—had just distinguished herself, Catherine approached her, and said that were the Empress a gentleman she should fall in love with her. This compliment drew forth a suitable reply from the Empress,



who said that if she were a gentleman she should certainly fall in love with Catherine. The Grand Duchess, who brought with her but one dozen of linen and three or four dresses to a court where the toilet was changed three times a day, felt that she must enchant her beholders by the freshness of her early youth and by simplicity of attire. Elizavetta once observed her at a ball in a plain white dress, ornamented only by a flower and ribbons. Such a costume for the heiress of an Empress who left after her death 15,000 gowns (8000 more were burnt on the occasion of the fire at the palace), several thousand pairs of shoes, and two chests full of silk stockings and ribbons, could not fail to attract the attention of all. Elizavetta, however, thought that it became Catherine ; but how was it that she had not one patch on her face ? The Empress took from her pocket a little box containing patches, and proceeded herself to stick some to Catherine's face. At that time Catherine did not either rouge or paint, and thus formed a striking contrast to other ladies of the Russian court, where this custom was

universal. When she had become Empress, and at her grand receptions was obliged to kiss the ladies, she was compelled to retire from the reception-room, and to wash the traces of red and white that adhered to her face from those of others, and in time she herself rouged and whitened. If we are to believe the words of foreign writers, who assure us that, towards the end of the reign of Catherine the Great, a servant was always hired with the previous condition of finding rouge and white for herself, or receiving them from her employers, we may readily credit that, in Elizavetta's time, the natural colour of the female face was such a rarity that it struck the beholder. Elizavetta sent the Grand Duchess a box of rouge and white as a present, and this was the beginning of the affectionate care which afterwards was shown when she recommended, as a remedy for Catherine's sunburns, a mixture of lemon-juice, French brandy, and white of egg. This recipe was found to be so effectual in its operation that Catherine subsequently used to recommend it to others who suffered from sunburns

and from other misfortunes with their complexions.

The Empress's physician, Boerhaave, prescribed for Catherine, on whose face some pimples had appeared, a mixture of Falke's oil with water, to be applied as a lotion to the face once a week only. The pimples disappeared.

But the Empress's care extended farther than to the mere exterior of her niece. She heartily wished that she would give up riding on horseback on a man's saddle, and Catherine had a new one invented for her, which folded up in a peculiar manner, and became at her will a saddle for lady or gentleman. When in the presence of her august aunt Catherine rode as a lady, but as soon as she was out of her sight she at once became a jockey.

Elizavetta longed to see Peter and Catherine the parents of a child, but she was doomed to many years of disappointment. The Grand Duke Paul was born in 1754, ten years after the marriage of his parents, and was their only child. Although his mother had been surrounded by Arguses previous to his birth, whom she

avoided in every possible manner, Paul came into the world suddenly and unexpectedly. Catherine lay almost without attendance and care, while Elizavetta herself carried off the newly-born infant to her own hot apartments, and gave him over to his feeders and nurses. His mother very seldom saw him, and between her and the Empress there were frequent disagreements, which date from about this time.

However fine a tactician Catherine may have been, she could not manage to keep up harmony in the Imperial family. Elizavetta was often too exacting. If Catherine did not bow low enough to please her, she would ask her if her neck ached. On one occasion she received a reprimand for having incurred a debt of two thousand roubles. When she wept on receiving news of the death of her father, Tcheglokoff, Elizavetta's creature, observed that the Prince of Anhalt-Zerbst was not a king, to be lamented over for a whole week. But the real reason of the rupture between the Empress and Catherine was the displeasure of the latter towards her nephew and heir.

At one time Catherine's position at court was so unpleasant that she begged the Empress, through her spiritual father Doubensky, to allow her to go and visit her mother at Anhalt-Zerbst. Pëtre Feodorovitch consented to this arrangement in the presence of the Empress, but the latter did not approve of it, and persuaded Catherine to remain at home.

One cannot but wonder that so clever a woman as Catherine, who conducted herself with such tact towards all who surrounded her, could not manage to keep herself on better terms with her consort. It is true that she managed all the affairs of Holstein. Pëtre Feodorovitch valued her learning highly, and in dilemmas used to say that, if *he* were ignorant, Catherine knew every thing. He called her *Madame la Ressource*. While assisting him in one respect, however, Catherine did not afford him that moral help and encouragement which attachment only could call forth. Pëtre was extremely susceptible of the influence of surrounding persons and circumstances. Kind, affable, candid, and not without wit, he was

always of a piece with those in whose society he happened to be cast. Had Catherine encouraged and helped him, in the midst of the frivolous and unsatisfactory crowd that they both lived in, she would have done him a real benefaction. But, in the first place, her position at court did not altogether guarantee a constant influence over her consort; many looked on the introduction of the *ci-devant* Stettin governor's daughter into the Imperial family as a favour awarded to Catherine; and, unfortunately, Pëtre Feodorovitch shared this opinion. He began by making his wife his confidante, concerning his *affaires de cœur*, but this distinction Catherine did not care to encourage. She was a perfectly cool looker-on of all her husband's fancies—cooler even than Elizavetta herself, who, for instance, made spiteful game of the plain maid of honour, Madlle. Poliansky, who at one time was the object of Pëtre's attention. But this toleration did nothing towards strengthening the authority of Catherine in the family. The interests of the husband and wife became

disunited, and though they lived together during Elizavetta's lifetime in the rather limited suite of apartments allotted to them, yet the world of the one had nothing in common with that of the other. The situation of either was similar, both being under a certain species of guardianship. But while Pëtre Feodorovitch spends his time in pleasure and amusement, Catherine is buried deep in her books, and passes long years in study and meditation. The sphere in which both lived would seem to be one and the same, but the difference was that it had an influence on Pëtre and none whatever on Catherine. If, in her heart of hearts, she really was preparing herself for the task of governing, her endeavours were crowned with brilliant success. The Prussian ambassador, Mardefeld, struck with astonishment at her wit and high cultivation, exclaimed in French, after a conversation with her, "Either I am a perfect fool, or you will be on a throne." "I accept the prediction," replied Catherine, also in French.

In a room hung with black lay the body of

Elizavetta Petrovna (1761), and the silver bowl of rice⁴, which was placed at the feet of the corpse, was renewed every day. New faces filled the palace. The soldier on guard, recognizing a foreigner by his garb, respectfully allowed him to pass. "See the consequences," says a foreign author, "of their having a German prince to reign over them." And, indeed, the Germans now expected all sorts of luck from Russia. The new Emperor, Peter III., never forgot that he was also Prince of Holstein. If we are to believe the "Memoirs" of Catherine II., he used to say that Russia was not created for him, nor he for Russia, and that he should perish there; but we must accept Catherine's authority with caution, for a hand unfriendly to Peter III. traced those Memoirs. Still, it was evident to all that little Holstein lay nearer to Peter's heart than big Russia. Peter III. was accustomed to Holstein; his character was formed there; and he could not become ac-

⁴ For explanation of this and other Russian customs, see "Sketches of the Rites and Customs of the Greco-Russian Church," H. C. Romanoff, 1869.

quainted with Russia amidst the monotonous life at the Petersburg Court; and people demanded of a man who had been brought up at first in the Greco-Russian religion, then in Protestantism, then once more in the Greco-Russian faith—a strict observance of all the rites and customs of the orthodox land. They expected from a Prince who had been bred in Germany, and who at one time was taught to regard Sweden as his fatherland, at another, Russia, to become one with the Russian people from the midst of the German courtiers who constantly surrounded him.

He reigned only half a year. We will not enlarge on the circumstances that preceded his death, as the reader is already acquainted with them⁵. Suffice it to relate that, on renouncing the throne, Peter III. merely requested that he might be left in peace, and that his lap-dog, Narcissus (a negro), his violin, some novels, and a German Bible might be sent to him.

In a few days intelligence was brought to

⁵ See Chapter II., Count C. G. Razoumoffsky.

Catherine of the demise of her husband, and the next morning it was made public. In the manifesto Catherine said that death was caused by colic. The body was opened, and the heart, says Catherine, proved to be very small. In a few days more the Empress invited her subjects to take leave of the deceased Emperor "without rancour." The body lay three days in the monastery of St. Alexander Neffsky, near St. Petersburg. Four candles burnt by the sides of a simple coffin. The Emperor was dressed in the uniform of the Holstein army, by no means fresh, and his hands, which were crossed on his breast, were covered with large white gloves, on which were marks of blood. No pomp or ceremony attended the funeral. The body was lowered into a miserable grave, which was forgotten until thirty-four years afterwards⁶, when the remains of Peter III. were exhumed and reburied with Imperial pomp.

The thought that entered Catherine's head on the road to Russia, that she would reign

⁶ That is, on the accession of his son, the Emperor Paul.

alone there, had been realized. Peter III. had not listened to the precautions of Frederick II. by making her his real friend, and now she reigned alone. But at the beginning of her reign her position on the throne was far from secure, and she had many difficulties to contend with, particularly with respect to the two parties that had arisen, those of Panin and of the Orloffs, both of whom were necessary to her. She valued highly the services of the latter, and even felt an attachment to one of the brothers—Gregory, who afterwards became her favourite, but she seems to have been grateful to the Panin party for opposing her marriage with him, which the Orloffs tried to bring about. Thus, though undoubtedly she was under the influence of the Orloffs at this time, as Frederick II. testifies in his *Memoirs*, yet she remained personally free. However diligently Catherine may have prepared herself for governing, still it was a difficult task to subdue all things to her own will, all minds to her own thinking; and with her convictions, her form of thought, her German extraction,

she could not but feel alone amidst the intrigues of the parties at her court. If the little oak-tree which grew alone among trees of other species at Monplaisir, presented a type of Catherine's reign, according to her own words, we must suppose that she alluded to the period we are now speaking of. She was alone among people and parties, all striving to gain their own personal ends. Germany, and even her own family, existed for her no longer; her mother, with whom during the reign of Elizabeth Petrovna, she was allowed to correspond only through the ministry of foreign affairs, and to whom, as a person suspected of political intrigues, Lestocq could deliver important notes only by means of a dropped glove on the floor, had died not long before, and Catherine, who was never a favourite child of hers, did not even pay her debts. For her brother, whom she did not love on account of his extravagance, she cared little or nothing, and thus she had no family ties to attach her to Germany, and she belonged heart and soul to Russia, though the time had not yet arrived when she became

perfectly acquainted with it. Hitherto her knowledge of Russia had been acquired through books; her life, as the consort of the heir to the throne, was almost private. Her acquaintance with her new fatherland in deed and fact was only now to commence.

This feeling of loneliness caused her to seek a prop—a stay; and this she found in the brothers Orloff, who had shown their devotion to her on the occasion of her accession to the throne. It was well, however, that the marriage before alluded to did not take place, as it was extremely repugnant to the people, and it is even said that there was a conspiracy against G. G. Orloff's life during the visit of the court to Moscow. He was saved only by the change of the soldier on guard, who had been bribed by the conspirators.

Catherine found in G. G. Orloff a remarkably clever man, one who really loved serious mental occupation, an eager inquirer into science, and in particular, partial to physics and natural science. He might be seen on his road to Tzarskoé-Selo reading a treatise on comets,

in his carriage. He had an observatory constructed at the top of the Summer Palace for his astronomical researches with the telescope. Scientific subjects were the favourite theme of his conversation in society. On one occasion the little Grand Duke Paul, who was of a lively disposition, and never could sit quiet for long together, rubbed the silk material with which the arm-chair where he sat was covered, in such a manner with his clothes, that electric sparks were emitted therefrom. The Grand Duke's teacher of physics, Epinus, was not less astonished at this phenomenon than the rest of the spectators. Be it remembered that at that time the laws of electricity were very imperfectly known. Rumours of arm-chairs that emitted sparks reached the Empress and G. G. Orloff, and orders were given that all such remarkable articles of furniture should be brought to the Empress's private apartments. Orloff immediately set about making experiments, and found that if silk material were rubbed with a muff, or even with the hand, it would emit sparks.


Orloff was one of those who sympathize with

all that was new in science and literature. His letter to Jean Jacques Rousseau, inviting that celebrity to Russia and to remain there, still exists. Rousseau at that time (1766) was living in England with the Duke of Richmond. Orloff says in his letter that he invites Rousseau to live on his estate from pure gratitude for the information he had derived from his writings. Orloff's estate is sixty versts from St. Petersburg; the climate there is healthy; one may meditate there as much as one wished—the priest there neither preaches nor disputes, and his flock, when they cross themselves devoutly, imagine in their simplicity, that they do all that is needful. Every thing is at the service of Rousseau—if only he himself wishes it; he can hunt, fish, and enjoy the society of whom he will. He shall not experience the slightest restraint, will not be dependent on any body—nobody shall know of his presence in Russia if he does not wish it. And he is advised to come by sea, if he can endure a voyage. In answer to this idyllic picture of his future life in Russia, Rousseau wrote that he could con-

sent to come were he less weak, were he more lively and younger, and if Count Orloff lived a little nearer to the sun.

With all his love for serious occupations G. G. Orloff's disposition was extremely lively and active. For instance we see him, in Peroshin's Memoirs, wrestling with one of the courtiers in the palace. On another occasion, in the attempt to leap over a garden-seat, he hurts his foot so seriously, that he is obliged to be dragged about the palace in a little carriage. At one of the Christmas masquerades at the palace Orloff appears in female attire.

The brothers Orloff profited long by the favour of Catherine. It is calculated that from 1762 to 1783 they received 45,000 serfs and 17,000,000 roubles in money from her; and it is supposed that each of the five brothers had 100,000 roubles per annum. G. G. Orloff's influence ceased on the elevation of Potëmkin; his end was very melancholy—he died in fits of madness. It was whispered that this madness was caused by certain drugs, and dark



hints insinuated that Potëmkin was to blame in the matter.

Catherine's reign bears a twofold character : at its commencement, until the Pougatchoff⁷ insurrection and the coming of age of Paul Petrovitch, the heir to the throne, we find in Catherine a wise and cultivated woman, whose great thought and anxiety was the happiness of her subjects, who sympathized with every thing that was calculated to destroy routine in science and in the life of the people. This is the time when she correctly represented herself, in a letter to Zimmerman, as a republican in her tone of thought ; when she loved philosophy, when she invited Delambert to be tutor to her son—when, in a word, G. G. Orloff was more intimate with her than any other person. But the Pougatchoff insurrection seems to have had the effect of entirely changing her ideas and tastes, and from this time she chose the path which she trod to the end of her life, one quite different to that which led her through

⁷ One of the several pretended Peters III.

the earlier years of her sovereignty. The dreams of national happiness were forgotten; not a word more was said of the law that was to be universal and accessible for all. Catherine gathered around her one exclusive class—the nobles. On it she showered all her favours: and Ségur justifies her in her own words, “ Je suis aristocrate ; c’est mon métier⁸.”

By Catherine’s throne during the first half of her reign stood Count Orloff; during the latter, we see Potëmkin⁹, whose elevation dates from the time of the putting down of the Pougatchoff insurrection, and who then became confidential adviser and assistant to his Imperial mistress.

He was the son of a poor Smolensky noble, and entered the University of Moscow; but, notwithstanding his excellent parts, he proved an idle student. He was extremely ambitious, and hoped that in time he might become a bishop or a prime minister. In 1760, however, he was expelled from the University for

⁸ “ I am an aristocrat—that is my trade.”

⁹ Pronounced in Russ *Potyómkin*.—(Tr.)

idleness and non-attendance at the lectures. He was twenty-four years old, and had nothing to do; he proceeded to Petersburg and entered the Horse Guards. In 1762, the tall and handsome Potëmkin was observed; for he was among those who took an active part in the events of that year, and of those who received generous compensation for their services from Catherine on her accession to the throne; but he did not play any remarkable part at court until 1774, when his clever management of the Pougatchoff affair, thanks to which it was arrested in time, turned the attention of the Empress towards him; and soon afterwards he appears as the confidential friend of Catherine, when the Panin party tried so hard to make Paul Petrovitch a partaker in his mother's labours. As a favourite, he seems to have profited by Catherine's kindness for two years only, but of all her fourteen favourites, who appeared one after the other at her court, Potëmkin was the only one who remained firmly in his place as servant to the Crown until the day of his death; and when he expired

on his cloak in the steppes of New Russia, the sixty-two years old Catherine wept so violently that they were forced to bleed her. She called Potëmkin her best friend, instructor, and pupil.

The Potëmkin of 1774 and later had little in common with the idle Moscow student of 1762. Catherine could not abide mediocrity, and he was but mediocre at that time. But an unexpected event had an influence over the whole of his future life. He lost an eye, and after the accident became dangerously ill. It was said that his eye was pierced by the sword of Count Alexis Orloff in a dispute. After this he became entirely changed, and from the brilliant, extravagant young officer he appears as the diligent student and serious thinker. He devoted himself to books, spending whole days in reading, and writing extracts and notes.

During the two years of his favouritism Potemkin received from the Empress 37,000 serfs, and 9,000,000 of roubles. He was allowed to take money from government whenever he pleased, without any formalities. He used to

write a little note stating how much he required, and frequently he did not even sign his name. Once Prince Viàzemsky received such a note demanding 10,000 roubles, when he begged the messenger to wait while he showed the note to the Empress. This vexed her. "He must want it!" she said; "why could not you give it to him without asking me?" And henceforth such was the rule. Among the books of Potemkin's library were bound volumes of bank-notes. His income was calculated at 400,000 roubles in the year 1785, yet notwithstanding he was frequently without money. He had the peculiarity also of not paying his little debts, and justified himself by De Cabra's observation, that the Russian in Catherine's reign was ready to lose 20,000 roubles at cards, but not to give one rouble to a workman. When he died it was ascertained that the Most-radiant Prince owed the cabmen of St. Petersburg 19,000 roubles and the flower-sellers 38,000. Enormous sums were squandered on his whims. Couriers flew from one end of the Empire to the other, to procure various

things that he fancied. Caviare was brought from the Oural, fish from Astrakhan, a peculiar sort of cucumber from Nejny, puff-paste from Kalouga. He liked to see people playing at billiards—the finest players were hunted out from all quarters; he also liked to watch a game of chess, and a celebrated player from Toula was sent for expressly, whom he used to carry about with him even to the camp. The two brothers Kouzmin were brought expressly by request of Potemkin from the Caucasus, merely to show Princess Dolgorouky how they performed the gipsy dance. From Cherson an *employé* was summoned to Petersburg, the Prince having heard that he mimicked others capitally. When at Otchakoff² a certain Mr. Spetchinsky was sent for from Moscow, because the Prince had been told he knew the Calendar by heart, and he did not believe it. “Is it true that you know the whole Calendar

² A town on the Dnieper, Cherson Government, remarkable merely for the importance attached to it in the wars between Russia and Turkey; it was the object of several sanguinary conflicts.—(Tr.)

by heart ? ” asked Potemkin of Spetchinsky. “ Quite true. ” Upon which followed an examination, which was satisfactorily passed. That was enough—he merely wished to convince himself of the truth of what he had been told³. In a word he was very eccentric, presenting the strangest contrasts ; the Potemkin, riding furiously on horseback in a green velvet redingote, lined with exquisite fur, or eating from a silver bath of 7-8 poods’ weight⁴, fish soup that cost 13,000 roubles, but little resembles the hypochondriac lounging on the sofa of his cabinet, or allowing his beard to grow, when, in an hour of hypochondriasis, it came into his head to become a monk.

Though he could despise people deeply, he was never revengeful. “ Do you remember how you expelled me from the University ? ” he asked in the most affectionate manner on meeting Professor Barsoff, who had parti-

³ The Russian Calendar is something tremendous ; each day, except 25th March, Christmas Day, and Epiphany, commemorates from three or four, to three or four *score*, and even hundreds of Saints, male and female.—(Tr.)

⁴ 252—288 lbs. avoirdupois.

cularly insisted on his exclusion. "You deserved it at that time, your Radiancy!" replied he. Personally, he disliked Prince A. J. Viàzemsky, but notwithstanding this he occupied the highest situations during the lifetime of Potemkin. Many other instances prove him to have been magnanimous in a high degree.

He had a strong fancy for religious subjects, theology and questions relating to the "Old faith" always interested him. It is true that he more frequently talked of religion to Generals, and of military affairs with Bishops and Metropolitans, but his favourite subject seems to have been the "Old Faith," many of the professors of which had access to him and, through his influence, obtained certain civil privileges which before they had been deprived of.

During the latter years of his life he was a martyr to ennui and hypochondriasis, and probably to distract himself, he gave a series of splendid feasts, one of which, which took

* A peculiar and dangerous schism.—(Tr.)



place in his Taurida Palace, resembled a realization of the tales in the Arabian Nights. 70,000 roubles' worth of wax candles was burnt on this occasion; Petersburg did not furnish sufficient, and more was sent for by post from Moscow.

But festivities had a charm no longer for him. Zoëboff, a new favourite, obtained each day new influence. There was a time when such a person could never have been dangerous to Potemkin, but Catherine at sixty years of age was very different to what we have seen her in her youth, and in many instances was no longer true to herself. Potemkin saw a rival in Zoëboff. "I have the tooth-ache—we must have it pulled out⁶," he said one day, when asked what was the cause of his low spirits. Such a "tooth," however, could not be got rid off, and Potemkin went away to the south, suffering highly from hypochondriasis, and never more returned. On receiving information of his death, Catherine was deeply grieved;

⁶ *A jeu de mots.* Zoob in Russ means a tooth. Zoëboff, a family name, formed by the plural genitive of "zoob."

the young Grand Duke Alexander Paulovitch⁷ observed, "There is one bad man the less;" and when told of his grandmother's distress he said, "I love and value my grandmother to the utmost degree, but I love my country still more, and for 'it Potemkin was a dangerous person."

The Emperor Paul, on his accession to the throne, had ample proofs of the harm that the Prince had done him in the opinion of the Empress, by the papers that he left, and it was not difficult to perceive this during her lifetime. Catherine's letters to Panin show us that she was attached to her son when a child, but gradually, as he grew up, the mother and son became estranged, and the evil genius who separated them was no one else than Potemkin. During Paul's reign much that had been established or commenced by Potemkin was abolished or altered; and it was even said that his body was removed from the vault in the


⁷ Son of the Grand Duke Paul Petrovitch, afterwards Alexander I.

Cathedral where it had been buried, and disappeared no one knew where.

The trifling details of the every-day life of celebrated or elevated persons are interesting because they are explanatory or illustrative of character. Catherine, for instance, always rose early, generally at six o'clock, when all in the palace were still asleep; she dressed herself without awaking any one, lighted her candle, and set fire to her stove. One of her favourite maxims was "Live and let live," and she endeavoured to give all who surrounded her the least possible trouble. While all was quiet in the palace she sat down to write. "I cannot live one day through without writing a little," she said at an advanced age to her Secretary of State, Griboffsky. For breakfast she drank coffee, extremely strong; a foont^s of Levant coffee served her for five cups only. On one occasion her Secretary, Kouzmin, drank a cup of such coffee, and was immediately seized with violent palpitation of the heart. Towards the latter part of her life Catherine's physicians

^s Nine-tenths of 1 lb. avoirdupois.

forbade her to drink it. Her full-blooded constitution, and the apoplectic fit that caused her death may be laid greatly to the constant use of such coffee. On the day of her death she drank two cups of it with great enjoyment. With her coffee she used to eat fried cubes of white bread, with which, and with sugar also, she used to feed her favourite dogs. She was extremely fond of the English dogs that Dr. Dimsdale brought her from England; they used to sleep by her bedside on little mattresses, and beneath little satin quilts. She was extremely fond of animals, and had the rare faculty of attaching them, as well as human beings, to her person. Strange dogs ran from distant parts of the palace to her apartments to lie down at her feet. Beasts and birds that were frightened of other people, met her half way and let her caress them. A monkey used to climb on her shoulders, and after a dreadful fire at Petersburg, thousands of pigeons flew to the palace yard, and used to be collected at the sound of a bell to be fed, by the Empress's own orders.



At nine o'clock she left her cabinet and returned to her bedroom; having seated herself in a chair covered with white damask, at a small table, she would ring a little bell for the lacquey on duty. She generally wore at this time of day, a dressing-gown made of white gros de Tours, and a white crape cap, put on rather on one side. On the appearance of the lacquey, she desired that the Police Master should be summoned; he, with the rest of those who had business with her Majesty, awaited his turn in the dressing-room. After him, one by one, in the same manner and form, all the rest were summoned. Each one bowed, kissed the Empress's hand if she were pleased to allow it, and if he had a report to present, he seated himself, at a given sign, at a little table near that of the Empress. Souvòroff, the celebrated General, used to prostrate himself three times before the picture of the saint in the corner of the room, and then turning towards Catherine, attempted to perform the same ceremony. "Have done! Alexander Vasilievitch!" the Empress would say, raising

and seating the old "*original*." "Matoushka!" the Field Marshal would exclaim; "next to God Himself thou art my only hope!" While the papers and reports were being read, she used to employ herself in some work—knitting, embroidery on canvas, &c., &c.

She occupied herself thus till twelve o'clock, when she passed from her bedroom into the smaller cabinet, where her old hairdresser, Kozloff, dressed her hair in the fashion of the past, with two small curls behind the ears; and where the young Grand Dukes, and sometimes the little Grand Duchesses⁹, came to wish their grandmamma good morning. And now appeared four ancient maidens to wait on her Majesty, each having her own speciality. One of them, Alexéeff, brought the ice with which Catherine rubbed her face; a second, Mlle. Palacvotchi, a Greek, put her cap on; while the two last, the sisters Zverieff, handed pins. During this toilet, which did not last more than ten minutes, the Empress conversed with

⁹ Children of Paul Petrovitch.

those who were present; and then, having bowed to all, she returned to her bedroom accompanied by her maids-in-waiting, and there with their assistance, and that of Maria Savishna Perekousikhine¹, her friend and companion, she dressed for dinner. For every-day wear Catherine had a silk dress made in a fashion called Moldavian, the upper part being lilac or drab, and the lower part white. On holidays she wore a gown of rich brocade, and three stars of the Orders of SS. Andrew, George, and Vladimir; sometimes she would put on the ribbons of the same orders, and the lesser crown. She wore heeled shoes, but not high ones.

She dined at about two o'clock, and seldom partook of more than three or four dishes. Wine she never drank except later, when by the orders of her physician she drank one glass of Madeira a day. Her usual beverage was currant jelly dissolved in water. Her companions at table assembled by invitation, except


¹ A lady who was active in the affair of the revolution that placed Catherine on the throne.

the favourite of the day, who always dined with the Empress. After dinner the time was spent in reading the foreign post or some interesting book. She did not like novels, though during the last years of her life she enjoyed hearing stories.

Catherine played a little at billiards, and during the evening she frequently played at cards: her favourite games were Boston, picquet, and cribbage. Her evenings were spent in the Hermitage², where a select society assembled, who were obliged to submit to certain rules which were made on purpose for the Hermitage circle. All who entered were to leave their "ranks and titles in the vestibule, along with their sticks and upper clothing³." All who acted against the Hermitage rules had to drink a glass of cold water, and read a portion of Trediakoffsky's "Telemachida." In certain instances Catherine

² A sort of museum and picture-gallery adjoining the Winter Palace.—(Tr.)

³ In Russia a visitor always leaves his fur cloak or paletot in the entrance-hall.




observed great form ; at her levées her masters of the ceremonies always inspected the guests to ascertain if they were properly dressed, and all who had not observed etiquette in their costumes were obliged to go away. But in such a select circle as that of the Hermitage, Catherine liked to be on an equal footing with others. The proud and magnificent Empress would fain draw attention to herself for her wit and amiability among the chosen members of her society, and not as a sovereign. Indeed, we may suppose that it was as easy for her to throw aside her majestic air as it was to assume it. A. Orloff used to call her "fine fellow!" Dr. Rodgerson exclaims, "Bravo, Madame," and claps her on the shoulder, after her having swallowed a dose of disgusting physic. Diderot in the heat of dispute slaps her knees, and yet all seems to be as it ought. Catherine is too wise to take notice of these familiarities in the simple and somewhat uncultivated Russian, the good-natured English doctor, and the lively, impressible Frenchman, whom she used to call a hundred years' old patriarch according to

some of his convictions, and a ten years' old child according to others. Once the whim took possession of her to make every one converse with the "thou". "Why dost thou not say 'thou' to me?" she asked of L. N. Naryshkin, who used constantly to amuse her with his jokes and fun, and to fill his pockets with things that he afterwards used to sell to her, &c., &c. "Very well," replied he, "only be thou thyself more polite to me." Try as they would the courtiers could not accustom themselves to say "thou" to the Empress; the Prince de Ligne mixed up "thou" with "Your Majesty." Catherine's regret that "you" had banished "thee" from conversation led to no further results.

At ten o'clock Catherine generally drank a glass of boiled water and retired to rest. We ought to mention that she never lunched or supped.

Thus passed nearly all Catherine's days;

⁴ In Russian common parlance, "thou," "thee," are always used. Masters to their servants, husbands and wives, parents to their children, &c



but if, in the Winter Palace, elegance predominated over magnificence, it was mingled, at Tzárskoé Selo, with poetical whims and fancies. Traditions still exist of the dances of nymphs and Cupids in the forest, to the sound of distant music and singing—here, prepared by unseen hands, appeared tables loaded with exquisite viands. Here too was that wonderful tree, under which whoever attempted to sit, found himself surrounded by a wall of water formed by an unseen fountain. Sometimes an aquatic masquerade was got up; dames and cavaliers, in various costumes, promenaded in the sea.

Although Catherine had no jesters at her court, yet she was fond of being amused, and Naryshkin, as we have seen, served as a great source of enjoyment to her, as he was not only irresistibly droll, but a man of high cultivation, wit, and penetration, satirical withal. Catherine, however, had another amuser, named Maria Danilovna, who diverted her with her fun, but quite in a different style. She was one of those, who under a show of infinite simplicity and innocence, had always a deep end in view. At

one time she took to abusing Ryléeff, the Head Police Master of St. Petersburg. "Listen, Nicetas Ivanovitch!" said the Empress to him one day, "you had better send Maria Danilovna a present of some sort." Although Ryléeff did not understand in the least why this was necessary, he took the advice of the Empress and sent Maria Danilovna a quantity of all sorts of provisions, and Catherine remarked that Maria Danilovna all of a sudden began to speak in high terms of the Police Master; of course she lost no opportunity of teasing her, and asking her if Ryléeff's geese and ducks were fat and nice?


Leading so regular and temperate a life as she did, Catherine remained comparatively young in looks and strong in health till her death. Of her personal appearance we have many opinions that entirely differ, and quite naturally, for she was one of those who changed in manner almost every moment. Her character presents so many traits that are entirely different the one to the other, that it is not surprising if the expression of her face were

equally changeable. Richardson, who visited Russia in 1768, says that in his opinion Catherine was the handsomest woman he saw there. Her smile was particularly charming; her plump, fair, and rosy face retained much of its freshness till she was past sixty; all her teeth were sound; her hands remained plump and handsome in form; but her sight failed slightly, and she was obliged to wear spectacles when she read. Griboffsky relates that one day he came with a report, and found her reading thus, "You do not require this contrivance, I dare say?" she said, smiling, and indicating the spectacles. "How old are you?" "Twenty-six." "We have blunted the sharpness of our eyes by long service to the state, and now are obliged to use spectacles." She was not very tall, and rather stout, but when she chose she could impart to her person so majestic, effective, and proudly-imperative a manner, that she appeared even tall, and sometimes she frightened persons, by no means of a timid disposition, and well accustomed to Court life and customs, with her haughty mien. Those,

however, who would fain find fault with the "Russian Semiramis" have something to say to the contrary of all this. "The lower part of Catherine's face," says the author of *Mémoires Secrètes*, "presented a certain squareness and coarseness; her light grey eyes a certain degree of hypocrisy and cunning; and the wrinkles on her nose gave her whole face an expression that was somewhat malignant."

The same author writes that when the celebrated Lampi, who took the portrait of the Empress—extremely like, but highly flattered—forgot to omit the tiresome wrinkle on the nose which imparted so characteristic a trait to the expression of her face, the Empress was extremely ill pleased, and said that Lampi had represented her extremely serious and awfully cross. "Nothing remained to be done but to repaint the picture until it became the representation of a youthful nymph." But we must not forget that these are the words of spiteful foreign pamphleteers.

In 1769, when forty years of age, Catherine caused herself and her son to be inoculated.



Inoculation was only just become known in Russia, and met with very few believers in its efficacy. Catherine's resolution was looked on as a feat of self-devotion. The Senate presented her with twelve gold medals commemorative of the occasion, and the hall of the senate-house at Moscow was ornamented with a bas-relief of the Empress, with the inscription, "She saved others to the danger of herself." She was inoculated with matter taken from a little boy of the name of Markoff, who, in remembrance of the event, was created an "hereditary noble".⁵ Dr. Dimsdale, an English physician,

⁵ We learn the following particulars of this affair from another source, "Two Episodes in the reign of Catherine II. ; Büchner." "A belief existed at that time that the person from whom matter was taken, was sure to die, and therefore the first visit of Dr. Dimsdale to the house of a certain person whose son lay sick of the small pox, caused a panic of horror. The mother of the child threw herself on her knees before the physician, conjuring him to spare her son's life; but her husband calmed her with these words, 'I love my son not less than thou, and also fear to lose him; but remember that this gentleman comes in the name of our *Matoushka Tzaritza* (Mother Empress), we belong to her, and so do our children. Even were she to ask our lives of us, we ought to consent without hesitation.'

who was sent for to inoculate the Empress, received a fee of 10,000*l.* for the operation, 500*l.* annual pension, the rank of Councillor of State, and the title of Baron. Every thing was done to give the utmost weight to the circumstance. But if the truth were known, Catherine was by no means the first to resolve on being inoculated in Russia. In Petersburg the Russian physicians began to introduce inoculation in 1758, and in 1759, just before the Empress's self-devotion, ten children were inoculated publicly.

Catherine possessed the faculty in a remarkable degree of captivating all hearts; it was not only a natural gift, but a science; she studied peoples' characters in order to know how to manage them, and she herself used to say that her power over others consisted in making every one imagine that he was acting from his own wish and conviction, and not by will of his sovereign. We must confess that

Dimsdale, however, consoled them all by guaranteeing on his word of honour the safety of the infant, and then proceeded to take the matter from him."—(Tr.)

such power was unbounded. Whenever she was about to issue a command she endeavoured to ascertain first whether it would meet with opposition or the contrary. "Good heavens!" exclaimed Derjavin, "who can resist this woman? Gosudarinia*, you are not a human creature! I made an oath to myself to-day not to speak a word to you, but you force me to do what you please against my own will!" "Is that true?" asked Catherine. Ambition and love of glory were strongly developed. She used to say, "that if she had been born a man, and in another station of life, she should not have kept her head long on her shoulders, for she should have rushed to the first battle in search of glory." Another time she declared that if she, like the King of England, had lost thirteen American States, she should have "put a bullet into her forehead." Prince de Ligne used to say that Catherine would never lose heart, even if the universe were to tumble to pieces.

* Empress-Sovereign. Used occasionally when speaking to the Empress. *Gosudár*—Emperor.—(Tr.)

Catherine endeavoured to become a complete Russian, and succeeded in an eminent degree. Surrounded as she was by Russians, she soon learned to speak Russ correctly, and frequently made use of proverbs, sayings, and old jokes. In writing, both in the French and Russian languages, she did not observe strictly the rules of good orthography. When an old woman she said to Griboffsky, "Don't you laugh at my Russian spelling! when I arrived here I wanted to learn it thoroughly, but Aunt Elizavetta Petrovna said, 'There's no need, she's clever enough without that.'" She used to say that the Russian language unites the richness of German and the melody of Italian, and that it ought to be universally received. In a letter to Voltaire, she tells him that his language was poor in comparison with that of Russia, and said that one must be such a writer as he, to write in French. She herself wrote much in Russ; historical essays, tales, comedies, &c. When the disagreements between Lomonosoff and the German members of the Academy of Sciences were going on,

Catherine by no means took the part of the latter, and would not listen to their scandal when they told her that Lomonosoff wrote his celebrated Russian Grammar in a state of inebriety, and surrounded with bottles. She respected the great savant, and proved her respect too. Soon after her accession to the throne, she paid him a visit with Princess Dashkoff, and found him at work; she was very attentive to him, and invited him to dinner, saying that she would have *stchi*⁷. In the colonnade at Tzarskoe Selo, his statue was placed by her order among those of celebrated persons.

Having adopted the language, and even the tone of thought of the Russian, Catherine also adopted many Russian customs. She steamed herself in the vapour-bath. She made the national dress to be that of the Court⁸; on every occasion she showed respect to the

⁷ Cabbage soup: the national dish.—(Tr.)

⁸ Ladies appear at Court balls, Imperial weddings, &c., &c., in Sarafans, Kokóshniks, and poviaskas, to this day.—(Tr.)

dogmas and rites of the Greco-Russian Church. She kissed the hands of the higher classes of clergy, who in their turn kissed hers, as Empress. She visits the vaults (or caves⁹) of the Kieff monastery, "and perspired there," she informs us, "notwithstanding a frost of 11-12 deg. (Reaumur) outside." From Kieff she sent two ladies of her acquaintance rings from the Great Martyr Barbara's relics¹. During a fast at Kieff she also eats *maigre*, and a letter of her own proves that she almost lived on potatoes. She converses with Diderot, and at the same time is enraptured with the sermon of the Metropolitan Plato, who answered by it Diderot's question, whether he himself believed, and took for his text, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."

Catherine's "long services to the state" ended suddenly on the 5th November, 1796. The evening before no one could have expected

⁹ Where innumerable relics of Saints are preserved.

¹ These, and caps and girdles, are hung about the relics of the Saint, and are supposed to be salutary to the wearers.—(Tr.)

the sad event ; there had been a little réunion at the Hermitage, and Catherine appeared in excellent spirits, having just received intelligence of the defeat of General Moreau by the Austrians on the other side of the Rhine. She even wrote a note to the Austrian ambassador in a tone of badinage: “ Je m’empresse d’annoncer à l’excellente excellence, que les excellentes troupes de l’excellente Cour ont complètement battu les Français.” Under the agreeable impression of good news, she joked more than usual with the court wit, L. A. Naryshkin, and even retired earlier than usual to her room, saying that she felt a slight colic from excessive laughter. The next day she rose at the usual time, occupied herself in writing the History of Russia; drank her coffee and received Zoëboff, but left her cabinet soon after, saying, however, that she would return immediately. A considerable time passed, however, and the Empress had still not come back; her attendants became alarmed, and her footman, Zachary Zotoff, resolved at last to ascertain the cause of her delay. He tried to open the

door of the room that Catherine had entered, but something prevented his doing so; he redoubled his efforts, and found the Empress on the floor, senseless, with her head to the wall and her feet to the door, and this it was that prevented its opening. Catherine was in a fit of apoplexy. The unexpected news flew like lightning through the palace, and caused confusion unspeakable. Every one rushed about, expressing their anxiety and sorrow; messenger after messenger was sent to the Heir, who was at Gatchino²; some people wept, others bustled about, others were utterly at a loss what to do, others began to form plans for the future. Zoëboff completely lost his head, and conducted himself like a madman; he would not allow the doctor on duty at court to bleed the Empress. Paul Petrovitch, who speedily arrived from Gatchino, addressed himself several times in the most gracious manner to his mother's favourite, and assured him of his good will, but he appeared

² A country residence of the imperial family.

to understand nothing whatever. He peeped into the room where the Empress lay, every few minutes, and returned each time with bitter sobs. "This nobleman sat in a corner," says a witness of these scenes, Count Rostapchin; "the crowd of courtiers fled from him as from one infected, and though he was suffering from heat and thirst, he could not procure a glass of water. I sent a lacquey for it, and handed to him myself the beverage that those who but the day before founded all their happiness on one of his smiles, now refused to procure for him; the room in which they formerly crowded each other to suffocation in order to approach him, had now become an uninhabited steppe for him."

In the mean time Catherine lay in dreadful agonies, wrestling with death; this lasted for thirty hours, during which time the Heir evinced the greatest and sincerest sorrow for his mother. The palace was full of people the whole night; among them were the highest servants of the state. Count A. G. Orloff, brother of the former favourite, neither ate nor drank

during the long death struggle of his Imperial mistress, and his grief was overpowering. At the senate-house business went on during the whole night: it is said that there were 30,000 suits undecided, unsettled; and as the authorities were aware that the new Emperor was an enemy to delay, they hastened to put resolutions to as many of such suits as was possible.

Catherine the Great was no more. Zòdboff wept like a child, and threw himself at the feet of Paul Petrovitch, who, though he embraced him in the kindest manner, and assured him of his good will, still desired that all the papers in the Count's cabinet might forthwith be sealed.

No time was lost in taking the oath of allegiance to the Emperor Paul, and among others who did so, was the Empress Maria Feodorovna. On the conclusion of the ceremony she bowed lowly to the Emperor, and, quitting her place from among the other members of the Imperial family, approached Paul, who was standing in the wonted place of the deceased Empress, and embraced him. He observed the absence of Count Alexis Orloff, who had gone home, and

sent for him, that he also might take the oath. Excusing himself on the plea of excessive fatigue, the effects of nearly two days' fasting and watching, he begged permission to take the oath early the following morning. The messenger, however, returned once more to the Count, with an order from the Emperor to come without delay. "I presume that you too should take the oath?" remarked Paul, coldly, on meeting the Count. The latter replied that he would do so immediately "with the liveliest pleasure."

The Empress's body was embalmed, but so badly that, in a very short time, it became much altered; nevertheless, it was dressed out for the ceremony of taking leave, with all due pomp and etiquette, in a gown of silver stuff, trimmed with Spanish lace, and with a crown on the head, placed there by the hands of the Empress Maria Feodorovna. All classes of her subjects were admitted to the throne-room, where the body lay in state, in order to kiss the hand for the last time, except peasants. Paul having expressed a wish that his father's

remains should share the funeral honours of Catherine, the body of Peter III., which, as we have seen, was interred at the monastery of St. Alexander Neffsky, was brought to St. Petersburg, arrayed in imperial robes, and placed by the side of his consort in a magnificent coffin. A party of cuirassiers were sent to Moscow for the regalia, as the Emperor wished to honour both his parents with a funeral of truly imperial grandeur. Count A. Orloff and Prince Baryatinsky carried the regalia by the express wish of the Emperor. The usually stately and majestic Count followed the funeral car with unequal steps, with downcast eyes, and a face as pale as death. After the funeral he received orders to leave Russia, and to travel in Germany and the south of Europe.

We are told that the first fit of apoplexy that seized Catherine was the result of offended dignity and wounded pride. It followed almost immediately after the unexpected intelligence that the King of Sweden, who had been received at St. Petersburg with the utmost respect and magnificence, and in whom all eyes beheld

the bridegroom of the Grand Duchess Alexandra Paulovna, had suddenly broken off his engagement with his beautiful bride. Catherine changed countenance, the blood rushed to her head, and it was supposed that this blow to the self-love of the Empress, in whose character this trait was so strongly developed, shortened her life considerably.

Catherine's career may be characterized in a few words. Naturally a glory-loving woman, she knew in what consisted true glory. She loved to dispense happiness and kindness to all around her, and those who wished to partake of her favours crowded around her in such thousands, that the millions who were in the background saw no light from the sun that shone on the happier few. Catherine had not genius enough to raise herself above the crowd that surrounded her, and to beam with the sun of her good intentions on all.

CHAPTER V.

THE PRISONER OF SCHLÜSSELBURG.

THE subject of the present narrative is Ivan, great nephew of the Empress Anna Ivanovna, who was first cousin to Peter the Great.

Anna Ivanovna, with a view to preparing future heirs to her throne, adopted her niece (daughter of her sister Catherine and the Duke of Mechlenburg). Anna Leopoldovna, as she was called, lived at court with her Imperial aunt, and at an early age plans were made for her marriage. When fourteen years old a bridegroom was brought for her from Germany; a prince of Brunswick, Anthony Ulrich, of the same age as herself, and henceforth the pair were educated together. It was

hoped that an attachment might spring up between them, which afterwards would assume a more tender character, but these hopes were vain—Anna Leopoldovna disliked her destined husband from the first glance. She was a morose child, close, obstinate and capricious. When told of these failings, she remarked merely that they were doubtless an inheritance from her parents, as she had heard that they also were obstinate and capricious. As a girl, too, Anna was neither communicative nor affectionate, and such was the Princess that was thrown in the way of Anthony Ulrich, a boy of small stature, effeminate, modest, and quiet, with very limited capacities, and a stutterer. The girl and boy did not suit each other. This was quickly observed by Biron¹, and he conceived the plan of profiting by the young Princess's dislike of Anthony Ulrich, and substituting his own son, who was five years her junior, in his place, and thus opening a road for his own ambition. But his schemes were

¹ The favourite of Anna Leopoldovna.

defeated by the firm character of the Princess. "The scythe hit against a stone," as the Russian proverb says. Every one who was acquainted with her real character knew, that her principal reason for her dislike of Anthony was, that he was prepared as a husband for her. But Biron was in power, and she detested him because he exacted submission from all. As soon as she divined his schemes, she determined sooner to marry the Brunswick prince without love, than to be the means of satisfying the ambition of Biron and his family. However, not obstinacy (contrariness) of character alone dictated this resolution. Anthony Ulrich, though of limited capacities, was at any rate of a soft and yielding disposition, while Peter Biron on the contrary, even at the age of fifteen, promised to out-do his father, who though passionate was not spiteful. Peter was extremely passionate and ill-tempered, and if there were any beginnings of good in him, the education that all Biron's children received was calculated to uproot them entirely.

In the mean time Anna's girlhood had not

passed without its little romance. Her attention, at sixteen years of age, was drawn to the handsome Linar, the Saxon ambassador, and the history of her love served only to render this shy and impressive nature still more shy. Anna's governess, Mde. Aderkass, aided the lovers in their meetings, and Linar commenced an intrigue which was to prevent the marriage of the Princess and Anthony Ulrich. It is more than probable that this was done not only to the knowledge, but even by the wish of Anna. But Anthony Ulrich was a *protégé* of the Empress—the affair was discovered, Linar was summoned to his native country, and the governess was banished to Germany.


Anna Leopoldovna was of middle height, with dark hair, black eyes, and a chubby face: her appearance was altogether ordinary, and without any thing to prepossess, and she never sought to improve by art what was given her by nature. She hated dressing herself and her hair according to the fashion of the day. Her coiffure was of her own invention, and quite different to that worn at the time; Chamber-

lain Minich found it excessively unbecoming to her. Other ladies wore hoops, but the princess, even when Regentess, used to go to church in ordinary petticoats, and with her head covered merely with a white handkerchief. During her Aunt's lifetime she detested the court levées, not only because she was obliged to dress for them, but because she was compelled to appear at them by the tyranny of the detestable Biron. Simple in her attire, she was as simple in her conversation and manners. Court life was not to her taste; she could not endure pretence; she loved candour, and was not only far from courtly politeness, but was even at times sharp in her expressions. She felt herself at home only in her own little circle, consisting of persons to whom she was accustomed, and among whom she had grown up, principally foreigners. In after times, however, we hear of her throwing aside her caution and reserve, and becoming the talkative, witty hostess in the circle that immediately surrounded her. But Anna Leopoldovna was neither soulless nor heartless. She was fond of reading French

and German, and in particular enjoyed the perusal of dramas, from which she frequently used to declaim. She used to say that her favourite reading was from such parts of a drama where persecuted princesses express their feelings to their persecutors.

When the fifteen-years' old Biron was proposed as consort to the twenty-years' old Princess, she would not hear of it. She chose the lesser of two evils, and gave the preference to the Prince of Brunswick, and the twenty-years' old blond, with his curled locks, in his smart silk coat trimmed with gold lace, had to thank the Empress Anna in set terms for her consent to his marriage, he having received the consent of the Princess. But the bride who had no one to thank, and nothing to be grateful for, gave herself up to her grief. "It is all your doing, you cursed ministers!" she exclaimed to Volynsky, unable to control her feelings.

A few weeks previous to the death of the Empress Anna Ivanovna, an heir to the throne, in the person of Anthony Ulrich's and Anna Leopoldovna's son, was born. The infant



was taken by the Empress under her own immediate care. Her first business was to desire that a special service of thanksgiving should be performed in every town in the empire. She had him named Ivan, and was his only sponsor. The infant lived with the Empress; he was always swaddled and unswaddled in the presence of the Duchess of Courland (Mde. Biron). As for his mother, no one seemed to think of her separation from her child otherwise than as the natural course of things, and by no means as a sacrifice to her maternal feelings. But she had not to endure it long. The Empress, having declared the little Ivan Antonovitch her heir and successor, and Biron Regent until he should come of age, died on 17th October, 1740.

Three weeks afterwards Biron's power ceased. He behaved with such insolence to the parents of the infant emperor, threatening even to banish them from Russia, that Anna Leopoldovna complained of it with tears to Field-Marshal Minich, and he, as an illwisher to Biron, was glad of an opportunity to injure

him. He undertook to deliver the Princess from her enemy, and fulfilled his plan with infinite success². Biron was arrested by order of the Princess and exiled to Siberia³, while the mother of the Emperor was declared Regentess. However, this *rôle* proved too difficult for the utterly unprepared Anna Leopoldovna; Minich, her Prime Minister, took offence at her distrust in him and retired from his office; and Osterman, the second in power, ceased to be listened to. In this state of affairs Elizavetta Petrovna, daughter of Peter the Great, took advantage of the attachment of the army to her late father, and assisted by Dr. Lestocq, took possession of the throne. The Regentess and her husband were arrested and sent to Schlüsselburg, a fortress on a small island in Lake Ladoga, with their infant son. Elizavetta had no ill-will towards Anna Leopoldovna, and was naturally of by no means a cruel or unfeeling disposition. She wished to send the Brunswick family to their relatives in Germany, and for


² Ulovaïsky's Hist. Russia.

³ See Chapter III., "Biron's Daughter."

this purpose they were removed to Riga, where they were to await further orders. However they did not go farther than Riga; in a year and a half's time Anthony Ulrich and his wife were sent to the town of Holmogory, in the government of Archangel; and the infant Ivan was sent to Ranenburgh, the result, we are told, of political foreign intrigues. Frederick II. it is true was a relative of the Brunswick family, but his rule was that those were his relations who were his friends. The House of Brandenburg at Berlin, and that of Brunswick which had held the helm of government at one time at Petersburg, differed in political opinions and intentions. Anna Leopoldovna and Anthony Ulrich, when reigning in the name of their infant son, took part with Saxony and Austria, who were on ill terms with Prussia. The deposition of the Brunswick family was of the utmost importance to Frederick, and he did all that lay in his power to prevent their regaining the throne of Russia. He represented to Elizavetta Petrovna, by means of clever agents, the great danger she might incur to

herself were she to allow the Brunswick family to return to Germany; and while he thus managed his part in the affair, rumours reached Elizavetta from Riga that Anna Leopoldovna was very discontented with her situation, and quarrelled incessantly with Soltykoff, the officer who attended her; also that the little Ivan Antonovitch was said to have threatened to cut off Soltykoff's head when he grew up. In a word, Elizavetta was systematically set against the Brunswick family, and they were brought back, as we have seen, to the interior of Russia.

An officer of the Guards was sent to Holmogory, to prepare a residence for the deposed family. He came straight to church, where divine service was being performed, and then and there informed the Bishop that the Empress desired that the Episcopal Palace should be at once prepared for the expected guests. The service was interrupted, and the Bishop demurred that he did not know where to find a lodging for himself, but the officer put an end to his protest in the name of the Empress.



All this took place in church, in the presence and hearing of all the congregation.

The utmost secrecy was observed with regard to the exiled family; they were not permitted to go farther than the garden of the Episcopal Palace. Anthony Ulrich lived here for more than thirty years with his family, but Anna Leopoldovna, having given birth to several more children, died in a few years' time. Her husband, it would appear, became accustomed to his situation and resigned to his fate. During the reign of Elizavetta, a very trifling sum was assigned for their maintenance, but on the accession of Catherine their means were increased. She inquired of Anthony what he required, what he wished for; and he replied that he wished for greater comfort and for a service of silver. A service and some furniture were accordingly sent for him from St. Petersburg, also clothing for his children suitable to their station; but as they had never had any thing similar before, and never seeing any society whatever, they absolutely did not know how to put it on, how to wear it! They saw

only the few attendants that surrounded them; they knew only the house in which they were born and bred, and the yard and garden that surrounded it. They saw, through the chinks in the paling, that flowers grew in the surrounding meadow unlike those in their garden, and, indeed, all beyond the paling was to them something mysterious, full of a strange, secret charm. Even when grown up, they remained children in their minds and manners. One of the princesses only, Elizabeth, did not differ from women of her own age. In this monotonous and dreary life their constant recreation was cards. In 1774 their father, who had become blind, died; and soon afterwards the two princesses and prince were sent to their relatives abroad.

When the rest of the family were sent to Holmogory, the little Ivan was left, as we have seen, at Ranenburgh⁴. Frederick II. mentions in his Memoirs, that the people who had care of him gave him a preparation of the plant stramonium, in order to make an idiot of him.

⁴ A town in the government of Riazan.

There is a tradition that he was carried away from Ranenburgh by a monk, in order to bring him to Germany ; but that he was seized at Smolensk, and subsequently sent to a monastery near Valdaï. If this be true, may we not suspect the hand of Frederick, stretched forth to destroy a child who might be dangerous for his political plans ? For what could be more alarming to Elizavetta than the existence of a rival candidate to the throne, under the protection of an ill-wisher to herself ? The English ambassador, Williams (at that time the interests of the English and Prussian Courts agreed), hinted to Elizavetta that Frederick II. might invade Russia in order to place Ivan VI. on the throne ; when the Empress answered, that if Frederick decided on such a step, Ivan would be beheaded without delay. About the same time, a German who brought a rouble from abroad with the image and superscription of the Emperor Ivan VI., was arrested and exiled to Siberia.

In course of time, Ivan Antonovitch was also sent to Holmogory, but he was kept entirely

separate from his family, none of whom were permitted to see him. The officer who had the care of him, Miller, by name, was instructed to call him Gregory, and to represent himself as father of the child. It is said that Miller, contrary to orders, secretly taught him to read and write. Other authorities inform us that a soldier on guard revealed the secret of his birth to him when he was twelve years old. The young captive was kept completely solitary, and even Miller's wife was not allowed to see him. The plan of the rooms which he occupied was sent to St. Petersburg, that it might be more fully understood how he was kept.

From Holmogory he was removed to Schlüsselburg. We learn from the Dutch Ambassador Svart, that in 1757 he was brought to St. Petersburg by orders of the Empress, under the strictest secrecy. He was lodged in the house of Petre Shouvaloff, and dressed according to his station; the Empress saw him twice, but he was not informed who she was. He was then seventeen years old, with beautiful fair

curly hair, large blue eyes, and a Roman nose, The unusually *white* fairness of his face testified how little the sunshine fell on him in his dull apartments. His voice was agreeable and melodious, but he stammered awfully. This may have been the result of his utter loneliness, having literally no one to talk to, but impediment in speech was an hereditary defect in the Brunswick family. The appearance of Ivan at Petersburg concurs with the final rupture between Elizavetta and Frederick, and with the commencement of the Seven Years' War. If we bring to mind that Frederick was the principal cause of the confinement of the young Prince, we must perceive that his presence at this time at Petersburg was a strong political symptom. But this was not all,—it was whispered that Elizavetta had the intention of nominating Ivan as her successor in preference to Peter Feodorovitch, her nephew, who was known to be devoted to Frederick II. The Court was excited by these rumours. The proposed plan, however, was not carried out, for Ivan was not fit to become Emperor. Imprison-

ment had done its cruel work. The divine spark of intellect had been extinguished for ever. The captive was again doomed to confinement, and was sent back to Schlüsselburg.

Five years afterwards a hired carriage drove up to the gates of the fortress, and from it issued five persons. They presented a pass, signed by the Emperor Petre III., permitting them to see Ivan Antonovitch. Notwithstanding his incognito, all knew that one of these visitors was Peter himself. Formalities must be observed, even by the highest; access to the prisoner was open to those only who presented a pass signed by the Emperor, and the officers on guard had strict orders to behead the Prince immediately on any attempt being made to obtain access to him without it. (This order was given in Elizavetta's time.) The companions of the Emperor were Naryshkin, Baron Korf, Ungern, Sternberg, and Volkoff, and to the first three of these we are indebted for the particulars of the visit. They found Ivan Antonovitch in a soiled jacket, and in slippers on his stockingless feet; he sat in a

dark room, the window of which afforded but little light, on account of the surrounding buildings. The atmosphere was stifling. The spectators beheld before them a young man of six feet high, with dishevelled hair, a reddish light-brown beard, and a wandering glance. Peter began to converse with him, but he answered unintelligibly, and with evidently wandering thoughts. He said, however, that he was not the person they took him for, though he was ready to accept his rights (i. e. the rights of the person they took him for). Peter ordered that his situation should be at once rendered comfortable—kind by nature, he wished to make up for past sufferings to the innocent captive as far as lay in his power. The prison-like life that had surrounded him was changed for a commodious residence in a large and airy house that was built on purpose for him. Peter also desired that he should be instructed, and allowed all persons to converse with him on any subject except his extraction. If Miller indeed taught him any thing, it was long ago forgotten. A crimson silk dressing-

gown, of which the Emperor made him a present, delighted him in the highest degree, and having put it on, he ran about the room with all the rapture of a child.

Subsequently Peter III. had Ivan brought to St. Petersburg (where he remained until the revolution which placed Catherine on the throne), and even intended to bestow the Princess of Holstein-Beksky in marriage on him. But on the accession of Catherine, the unfortunate young man was again confined in his old prison at Schlüsselburg. Catherine, however, saw him, and found him, as the official document on the subject has it, "a stammerer, wanting of reason and human understanding⁵." The same document adds that all who were with Catherine at the time, saw how deeply she pitied him. And this was the bridegroom that was proposed to Catherine in the address composed by Bestoujeff!

Ivan Antonovitch perished in the fortress

⁵ Anglicè—an innocent; not a born idiot, but originally not of brilliant capacities, and become simple by sheer neglect.—(Tr.)

of Schlüsselburg on the night of the 4-5 July, 1764, during the time of Catherine's visit to Lithuania, under the following circumstances:—

Vasily Miróvitch, a lieutenant in the Smolensk regiment, had long ago determined to deliver the captive from his confinement. He communicated his plans to a friend of his, Lieut. Appollon Oushakoff, and they vowed to each other in the Kazan Church at St. Petersburg to help each other in the affair. Oushakoff, however, was drowned, and Miróvitch determined to act alone. He was one of the officers on guard at Schlüsselburg, and he persuaded three corporals and three soldiers under his command to assist him. The guard changed every week: Miróvitch begged for permission, on the occasion we speak of, to keep guard out of his turn. Thirty-eight of his men knew nothing whatever of his intention. On the night of the 4th July he collected all his soldiers and proceeded to that part of the fortress where Ivan Antonovitch was kept. Miróvitch struck the commander of the fortress, Berednikoff,

with the but-end of his gun, but not seriously, arrested him, and leaving him under the charge of ten soldiers with drawn swords he demanded of Captain Vlasieff, the Prince's guard, that the prisoner should be immediately delivered over to him. Vlasieff had only sixteen men under his command, i. e. only about a third of those under Miróvitch, but he refused to fulfil the demand, and informed Miróvitch that he must fire on his men. Miróvitch's men fell back, and the soldiers, who were ignorant still of their commander's intentions, demanded an explanation; upon which Miróvitch took from his pocket an ukase, which he said was sent from the Senate, and read it aloud to the soldiers; the paper stated that as Catherine was weary of reigning over so ungrateful a people, she intended to abdicate the throne and marry Count Orloff; and therefore the Senate had resolved to liberate Ivan Antonovitch, and to declare him Emperor. Overcome, however, by Vlasieff's men, Miróvitch had a cannon carried from the bastion and directed towards that part of the fortress which

was guarded by Vlasieff, and threatened to fire.

But while these doings were going on in the yard of the fortress, in the interior of Ivan Antonovitch's prison a fearful scene of struggle for life was being acted between the freshly awakened, unarmed youth and the officers who guarded him. We know already that they had strict orders to murder him on the first attempt towards setting him free. When the alarm was first given, Ivan was asleep. The officer on guard wounded him while still sleeping; he awoke instantly and seized the sabre that wounded him. A struggle ensued, the sabre was broken, but eight sabre wounds, quickly following one another, put an end to the struggle—Ivan was no more.


When the death of the Prince became known to Miróvitch, he lost all heart; all his hopes fled. Nothing now remained but to give himself up, which he did to his own serjeant, who received his sword.

Miróvitch's attempt took place at a time when conspiracy after conspiracy against Ca-

therine were formed and discovered, and when several false Peters III. had appeared on the scene. The prisoner of Schlüsselburg was decidedly looked on as a rival to Catherine, and a hindrance to her firm seat on the throne, and his death disarmed her enemies and encouraged her friends. All these circumstances served to awaken doubts. "The greater part of the Russians," says the aforesaid Williams, "are certain that the officer was a blind instrument of the Court, and by no means a conspirator or a leader of a revolution." Indeed, he remarks further, that Miróvitch was reported to have expected a reward for his deed, and that he was executed merely to quiet the people on whom the death of Ivan Antonovitch had made a deep impression. To all this, however, we can present refutations, as the following particulars of the conspiracy will prove. These particulars are gathered from the papers relating to the commission of inquiry respecting the affair. But we have a refutation which is far more important than all others—why did not Miróvitch betray his accomplices, why did

he suffer alone, if he were indeed the instrument of others? He had the right even on the scaffold to name those who had brought him there, and who now, by his death, were about to rid themselves of a dangerous witness against them. To this some may reply that Miróvitch regarded his trial and sentence as a mere farce, and went boldly to the scaffold, firmly expecting to receive pardon there, as indeed did the crowd which surrounded the place of execution.

However, the persons who were appointed to try and to judge Miróvitch, were of opinion that the true reason of his ill feeling towards the Empress was, that certain lands which had belonged to his grandfather, and which were confiscated for the part that he took in Mazepa's affair, were not returned to him. It was also found that according to the original plan Oushakoff was to have brought the ukase (which Miróvitch read to the soldiers) in a boat from St. Petersburg, and in the same boat was to have carried off Ivan Antonovitch to the artillery camp near Petersburg. It was also revealed that Miróvitch and Oushakoff made an



infinity of vows to the Virgin, many of them extremely strange, if their enterprise succeeded. It would appear that others were aware of Miróvitch's intention, and that a boat certainly did leave Petersburg on the night of the murder, by a preconcerted plan. When questioned by Prince Viazemsky as to his accomplices, Miróvitch repeatedly and firmly declared that he had none, though it was clear that he had. Sous-lieutenant Simeon Chefaridzeff said, that he heard from Miróvitch himself of his intention to bring the Prince to the artillery depôt at Petersburg. Chefaridzeff related the circumstance to a certain Registrar, Bezsonoff, who struck him, and exclaimed, "Do no not tell lies, you fool!" Many were of opinion that persons of importance were concerned in the matter. At the trial, Count Panin asked Miróvitch what reason he had for liberating Ivan Antonovitch? He replied, "In order to become what you are!" Copies of the false ukase, which were found in Miróvitch's pocket, were given by Panin to the Empress, that she might destroy them with her own

hand. Miróvitch was condemned to death; and we are told by Derjavin that the people (who expected that he would be pardoned) were so excited and shocked at the sight of his head in the hands of the executioner, that the bridge on which the crowd stood, shook again from the trembling of the people, and the balustrade was broken down completely.

While Miróvitch's trial was proceeding, the body of the murdered prince was exposed to view at Schlüsselburg. He lay in his coffin in the costume of a common sailor. He was afterwards covered with a sheep's skin and interred without any religious rite.

The officers on guard who killed him were sent to Denmark for a time, as alarm was entertained for their safety from the enraged mob; but they were subsequently recalled and promoted to higher rank, as having fulfilled given orders with exactness.

CHAPTER VI.

THE EMPEROR PAUL (PÁVEL PETROVITCH).

IMMEDIATELY after the birth of the Grand Duke Petre Feodorovitch's son, the Empress Elizavetta (grandmother of the infant) took possession of him and carried him away to her own apartments, as we have before seen. She became strongly attached to the child, and used to go several times in the course of the day to see how he was getting on with the crowd of nurses to whose care she had committed him. These nurses, however, so terrified the little Paul with their histories about the Empress, that at the age of four or five years he used to tremble from head to foot at the sound of her step. Whether from this reason,

or because she herself became colder in her feelings towards him, certain it is, that latterly she used to visit him not more frequently than once or twice a year.

The society of nurses and maid-servants during these first years of his life, had a lasting effect on Paul. The stories of ghosts and bogies, with which the women lulled the Empress Elizavetta to sleep while tickling the soles of her feet, had much to do with her nervous imaginations; therefore it is not surprising that similar terrific narratives should have so affected the imperial child, that the slamming of a door caused him a paroxysm of fear, and even when nearly grown up he was greatly afraid of thunder-storms. On the news reaching his nursery that a tutor (the celebrated Panin) had been selected for him, the nurses again told him such frightful histories of the strictness of his future teacher, and of the melancholy change that would take place in his own life, that Paul cried for a whole month previous to being committed to his care; and one day happening to see an old gentleman

in a wig approaching him, whom he falsely imagined to be Panin, he burst into floods of tears.

One must confess that on first acquaintance with a pupil who had been so alarmed at the bare idea of him, the teacher might have endeavoured to render their meeting agreeable, but he introduced himself at the very outset as a despot. Paul missed his old companions at table, and unaccustomed to the grave and sedate "gentlemen in waiting" who now sat with him, he very naturally asked the reason of the absence of one of his friends. "We don't want him," replied Panin. On perceiving through an open door, that one of his gossips, Mavra Ivanovna, was in an adjoining room, Paul requested that a cover might be laid for her. "We don't want her," was again the answer. When the teacher and pupil had become better acquainted with each other, we find Panin "shouting" at the Grand Duke. It is true that Paul was to blame, for he had called one of his gentlemen in waiting a fool, and said that "the devil had brought him there;" but Panin (so clever and superior a

person as he is represented to have been) should have known that even such a fault on the part of the pupil, could never excuse such a burst of temper in the teacher, and that it merely lowered him in the child's eyes. Still, we have many proofs that N. T. Panin was one of the most enlightened men of his day. In Sweden, where he was Ambassador, he occupied himself in learning various handicrafts, and his contemporaries tell us that honesty and virtue were written on his face. On receiving a handsome reward from the Empress Catherine, he shared it generously with his secretary, saying that he had assisted him in his labour: very few of his confrères would have shown such bounty; and he himself admitted that during Elizavetta's reign he declined the appointment of Vice-Chancellor in order to become the instructor of Paul; and that in that of Catherine he might have received an income of 10,000 instead of 7000 roubles had he resigned his post as tutor. We must conclude therefore that he was attached to his pupil, especially when we are told that in after

years the Grand Duke, now grown to years of manhood, kissed, with passionate tears and deep grief, the hand of the dying Panin.

Probably Elizavetta would not have selected this unsympathetic person as Paul's "educator," had she all along felt the same attachment that she manifested towards him in the baby-years of his life; but the fact was that she was not only on cold terms with his father, but it was even whispered that she had altered her mind about naming him as her successor, and that Ivan Antonovitch was brought from Schlüsselburg, in order that Elizavetta might see him, and decide whether it were possible to nominate him as heir to the throne.

Paul had his own little court—a crowd of courtiers eager to please him; and distributed considerable sums of money according to his own childish discretion. He dressed himself now in the uniform of Lord High Admiral, now in plain clothes, now in a white taffety dressing-gown, and other costumes; a ship, fifteen feet in length, and toys innumerable, were at his service. He was allowed to do almost


every thing he chose. For instance, no one interrupted him in the reading of the article "*Amour*," in the French Encyclopædia, although they all very well knew that he ought not to be permitted to do so. He mischievously cut little bits out of his white taffety dressing-gown, because grains of snuff from the nose of his French valet (*Fousadier*) had fallen on them, and yet it was looked on by all as a matter of course.

Is it then to be wondered at that Paul's character presents certain traits, which it might not have presented had he been differently brought up? The experiment was not lost on Catherine, who endeavoured to educate Paul's children, Alexander and Constantine, quite in a different manner.

Paul was extremely impressionable, the principal capacity of his mind being imagination. He drank in with great avidity all that he heard said, and often listened with attention to conversation that was going on, without betraying that he was aware of it. He observed the slightest trifles and the most minute par-

ticulars; he knew every thing concerning all those that surrounded him, from the highest to the lowest. Such was the strength of his imagination that the picture of a pyramid seemed to him to represent a ship, after he had long and attentively regarded the toy ship above-mentioned. Sometimes he would imagine himself in the service, or a Knight of the Order of Malta, and would introduce himself as such to the companion of his games and studies—Sasha¹ Kourakin—the same whom we find him mimicking to the life, and showing what airs “Alexander Borisovitch Kourakin” would give himself when he became Lord Chancellor. He thought much of his dreams, which always made a great impression on him, but at the same time it was singular that he slept particularly well, and so soundly that on one occasion, while quite a baby, he fell from his suspended cradle to the floor without waking. He frequently mistook his own fantasies for real facts; and there was a certain nervousness and hurriedness observable in his

¹ Diminutive of Alexander.



somewhat changeable disposition; he would suddenly lose his heart completely to some one, and then as suddenly and without apparent cause, become cold towards him. On rising he dressed himself hurriedly; he was in tortures if dinner was a long time being served; at table he swallowed his food in immense pieces, in order that the meal might be over the sooner. Once, previous to a masquerade (Paul was very fond of masquerades), he counted the hours to its commencement more than three days.

The peculiarities of Paul's character must be studied with due regard to those of his constitution; and it is much to be regretted that he had no one about him who cared to acquaint himself with the requirements of his physical nature. For instance, Paul was *punished* by being fed with milk, which he liked and which agreed with him, whereas he detested animal food; they made him eat meat, and would not allow him fish, to which he was also partial, having become accustomed to it during his early childhood when he lived with his nurses,

and kept the Fasts of the Greco-Russian Church with them. A lad of such a sanguine and passionate temperament needed less than any thing a diet of animal food, and yet he was compelled to eat it, although it caused great nausea, and even worse than that; on such occasions, and when he suffered from headaches, he was told that his indisposition was caused by his having swallowed the meat in too large pieces. Medical science explains to us the unnatural state of irritation, and the disordered imagination of the young Grand Duke by the constant derangement that his digestive organs evidently suffered from, though it would seem that Panin certainly did pay some small degree of attention to his pupil's diet, as we are told that he always tasted the coffee prepared for him before allowing him to drink it.

Paul could never remain long in one place; he required constant motion, and was always on the run, skip, and trip; this tripping style of gait was inherited from his father, to whom in many particulars he bore a strong resemblance,

not only in person, but in disposition—a resemblance to which the historian and psychologist might do well to turn their especial attention. Liveliness was one of his strongest characteristics; with a most expressive, ever-changing countenance, he was very far from being handsome; he could not pronounce the letter R, and had a habit of smelling every thing that presented itself to his notice for the first time.

He was not without a fair portion of self-love. Once, at the theatre, he was seriously offended because the pit presumed to applaud before he set the example. When his bust was brought home in a finished state, and was approved, he took offence again. “What can they find to praise in it?” he exclaimed; “see what a fright they have made of me!” But on the other hand the little Paul detested court flatterers. When on the point of commencing a dance in a ballet, they began to applaud him before he had performed one step, “Regular peaches!” he exclaimed (*peaches* being an original term of his own for flatterers).

“O Court! Court!” Notwithstanding his lively imagination he was not fond of the theatre, and used to say that he much preferred solitude: that if he were a girl he should certainly enter the Smolny Convent², evidently supposing that the word “convent” must be synonymous with solitude. At one time he arranged a mimic monastery in his apartments; he called it after himself,—the Pavloffsky Monastery; its abbot was Panin, and Paul himself the only monk, always on duty!

He was naturally very kind-hearted, and never forgot his old friends, and used to visit his nurses, who adored him, and kept locks of hair cut from his head when a child as their greatest treasure. At twenty-seven years of age, he wept on parting with his monitor, Saltykoff. On becoming Emperor he wrote a letter to the Governor of Riazan, dictated by the conviction of his own heart, concerning an unfortunate woman who was accused of having secretly buried her still-born infant,—saying

² An immense government establishment for the education of the daughters of nobles.—(Tr.)

that she ought not to be committed for trial, as the circumstances in themselves were a punishment sufficient. His quickness of temper, and partially the manner in which he was educated, may explain the harshness with which he occasionally expressed himself when displeased with any one or any thing. "A Stump, let it be dressed as it will," he said of Mademoiselle Panin, a maid of honour, "always remains a stump." But he recovered his temper as quickly as he lost it, and we find him begging Poroshin's³ pardon immediately after having quarrelled with him. Such a disposition demanded kindness and good example, severity merely tended to the development of obstinacy. He once forgot himself to such a degree at table, that a person present remarked of him "C'est une tête de fer," and Paul was sent from table. "Notwithstanding the excellent qualities of your Imperial Highness's heart," said Poroshin, "you may make us all hate you!" It was perhaps harshly and hastily.

³ One of his teachers, whose "Diary" forms one of the principal sources of the present narrative.—(Tr.)

spoken, but the words sank deep into the impressionable heart of the young Prince, and made him endeavour seriously to correct his faults.

In a word, the object of his teachers' cares was his intellect alone, the cultivation of his heart was entirely neglected.

The Empress Catherine began to think about seeking for a suitable bride for her son when he was a mere child ; and at ten years old we find Paul himself inscribing the name of his favourite maid of honour on the window-pane ; and at eleven, attentively perusing, for the second time, that part in Rollin which speaks of the qualities of woman, trying, at the same time, to conceal from others what he was reading. "When I marry," said little Paul at about the same time, "I shall love my wife very dearly, and be very jealous of her." The Empress looked with indulgent eyes on his little flirtations with the maids of honour, and they in their turn encouraged the child as much as they dared. They nodded to him from the window ; called him "darling Puniushka,"

made a show of great disappointment if he danced at masquerades with any body but themselves, and teased him if they observed a preference on his part for either of their own party. All this did not escape the observation of Paul's tutor, who records various bows, winks, and nods, that passed between his pupil and the objects of his attention. In these childish fancies there was no lack of jealousy; one of his flames he called "the ten of hearts," saying she had one for every body who sought it; and subsequently, in a fit of displeasure with the same person, he tore up a "ten of hearts" card to atoms.

After a search of some years, a bride was at length found by a certain Asserburgh, Catherine's agent and confidential man of business, who travelled from one German court to another in quest of a fitting spouse for the youthful Paul. Among the princesses whom he saw was one who particularly attracted his attention by her beauty and goodness, but as she was only nine years old at the time, he was obliged to pass her by. However, we shall

hear more of her in the sequel—she was then called Dorothea of Wirtemberg.

Asserburgh's choice, which was approved by the Empress, fell on a Princess of Hesse-Darmstadt, Wilhelmina by name. As a child she was lovely, but as she grew up she altered completely. Her features lost their delicacy; her nose and mouth became quite different in form, her complexion clouded and dark; her figure, gait, and even voice, were no longer what they were. The gaiety of her character gave way to reserve and curtness in conversation; she was gloomy, inanimate, and absent. Dancing, pleasure in general, dress, and the society of young companions, seemed to have no charms for her. Her cleverness and submissiveness were highly spoken of, but there was no lack of caprice in her disposition; she was nervous, and rather abrupt; yet Asserburgh wrote that she was singularly even in her intercourse with every one, sincere, and always open to conviction. He hoped that different circumstances and new obligations would render her softer, more agreeable, more

lovable, in a word. A long correspondence ensued between the Empress and Asserburgh, in which the letters of the former testify to her remarkable cleverness and her deep knowledge of human character. But correspondence was not the only means by which she endeavoured to become acquainted with her future daughter-in-law. Catherine was a firm believer in physiognomics, or the gift of knowing a person's disposition by his face, and if she could not satisfy herself on the subject by a personal inspection of the individual, she judged of him as far as possible, by his portrait. Asserburgh duly sent the Empress the portraits of Wilhelmina and of her sisters, and that of the former pleased her most. Negotiations commenced, which terminated in the arrival at St. Petersburg of the Landgravine of Hesse-Darmstadt, with the three princesses her daughters. We will not enter into particulars, but will merely state that Wilhelmina was the chosen one, and that she eventually became a member of the Imperial family under the name of Natalia Alexéevna. The young wife had great influ-

ence over Paul, and showed much firmness and sound good sense. But it was not for long—after a very short period of married life, which through the intrigues of influential courtiers the young couple passed in almost complete retirement, Natalia Alexéevna died in her confinement, leaving Paul a very youthful widower.

The Princess Dorothea of Wirtemberg had in the meantime attained years of girlhood, and on her the choice of the Imperial mother fell as second consort for her bereaved son. Dorothea was accustomed to hear a great deal about Peter the Great and his subjects, and about Russia in general, from the wife of her brothers' tutor, Madame Mokler (formerly Mademoiselle Lefort, and descended from the celebrated Lefort of Peter's time), and even as a child she used to listen to these narratives with the utmost interest. Baroness Oberkirch tells us that she remembers how Dorothea always made a point of pretending to sneeze when she attempted to pronounce a certain difficult Russian name, which invariably caused hearty laughter

in the little circle. "Fortunately, the gentleman who bore this name," adds the Baroness, "died before the wedding of the Princess took place, otherwise he would have been the cause of a perpetual catarrh to her." She had heard so much of Russia in her childhood, that when the question of her marriage was raised, she seemed to consider it her settled fate. She was delighted at the idea, and called herself the happiest Princess in the world. But at times a shade of thought would pass over her rosy young face, and darken her beautiful, kind, but short-sighted eyes. "Sometimes dreadful misfortunes happen to kings," she would say, "who knows what fate Heaven may prepare for my child?" Soon again, however, the childish melancholy would disappear, and she would begin to practise making courtesies before empty arm-chairs, together with a young friend of hers, in order that she might not feel herself at fault when she appeared at Catherine's court. The thought of the Empress disturbed Dorothea seriously; she had heard so much about her. "I am afraid of Catherine," she said,

“she terrifies me! I am convinced that I shall appear awfully foolish to her. Oh! if I do but manage to please her and the Grand Duke!”

Catherine said, that to judge from Dorothea's portrait, she had but one quality, and that was goodness. Lovely in person, perfectly feminine, a passionate lover of flowers, it was impossible for her not to please the Grand Duke. As Empress she retained traces of her beauty and freshness till she was past fifty, within the memory of persons still living. Her even temper, her sweet patience and love of order and regularity in every one and every thing (the characteristic trait of the Princess Dorothea), were doubtless instrumental in preserving her charming looks.

The wishes of the Empress were accomplished in due time. Dorothea became her daughter-in-law, and Grand Duchess by the name of Maria Feodorovna. The young couple lived in the greatest harmony and affection. From the letters of Maria Feodorovna, as we must now call her, to the young friend before mentioned, it is evident that her newly-formed attachment was

intensely strong. An episode during the tour in Italy that the Imperial pair made a few years after their marriage, shows that they still were in love with each other. They were travelling in a carriage with Sir William Hamilton, an Englishman, when Paul happened to kiss the Grand Duchess. The strictly proper Englishman turned his head aside, looking out of the window and endeavouring to make believe that he did not see any thing. This manœuvre delighted Paul, and put him at once into high spirits. He continued kissing his consort every time Sir William ventured to turn his head towards them, Hamilton as perseveringly averting his eyes at each kiss; his confusion and distress were at the highest pitch when they at last arrived at the end of the journey and his tortures came to a termination.

With Maria Feodorovna's loving and intrinsically womanly feeling, it was impossible for her to be otherwise than a careful and affectionate mother. When it was decided that she was to accompany Paul on his foreign tour, she could hardly be persuaded to leave her in-

fant children; and on the day of her departure she was carried to the travelling-chariot in a fainting condition.

A few words must be added with regard to this tour. It was the universal opinion that at Paris Paul was received by the King as a friend, by the Duke of Orleans as a citizen, and by the Prince of Condé as an Emperor. The Cathedral of Notre Dame at Paris, and that of St. Peter at Rome were greatly admired by Maria Feodorovna, but she confessed that the Greek Churches were more to her taste. During the performance of "La Chasse de Henri Quatre" at the theatre, Paul was affected to tears, and requested that it might be acted a second time. This of course was done, and in honour of the circumstance some verses were composed, prophesying that Paul would resemble Henri Quatre. He made an interesting observation about the French on overhearing, in a crowd that surrounded him, the audibly expressed opinion that he was ugly. "The French are very polite," he said to the Russian Ambassador to the Court of France, "but one

must confess that they are extremely frank.” Queen Marie Antoinette made a strong impression on Paul, and he talked so much of her beautiful eyes, her aquiline nose, and lovely lips, that Maria Feodorovna, says the Baroness Oberkirch, could not restrain a slight feeling of jealousy. A shade of the same feeling may be observed in the remark that the Grand Duchess made on the hyperbolical expressions of gratitude that this same baroness made to Paul for some flowers and fruit that he had given her—she called it the effects of indigestion.

We have every reason to believe that the Empress was deeply attached to her daughter-in-law, so much so, that we see her fulfilling the duties of a monthly nurse to her, and literally saving her from death at the birth of the Grand Duchess Caterina Paulovna—but it was her Imperial will that her son’s children should be educated at St. Petersburg under her own immediate superintendence, while their parents continued to reside at Gatchino⁴. Maria Feo-

⁴ A country residence of the Imperial family.—(Tr.)

dorovna's life as Grand Duchess was not composed of roses only; the 30,000 roubles that the heir to the throne received was barely sufficient for the maintenance of his court. When the mother of grown-up children, the Grand Duchess was obliged to travel every week by the shaky road that lay at that time between St. Petersburg and Gatchino, in order to see them: she always accompanied her husband on his favourite military expeditions, his manoeuvres and exercises, suffering frequently from the damp and cold. In the Act that was prepared in the event of Paul's death, when he was on the point of joining the army then on active service (1788) he thanks her for her patient endurance.

From the time of his marriage to that of his accession to the throne, Paul lived almost entirely at Gatchino. We have already seen^b that Potemkin was the cause of much coldness and distance between the Empress and her son, and to his influence must be attributed the

^b See "Catherine the Great," page 166.

extraordinary meanness of the income allowed to the Grand Duke. At the time we are speaking of, the Russian Ambassador at Warsaw was in the receipt of 44,000 roubles, and the Ambassador at Constantinople of 26,000. At Catherine's own court, during the latter half of her reign, which corresponds to the period we are now considering, luxury was indulged in to an excess; for the maintenance of three courtiers only, a daily allowance of 600 roubles was made. In comparison with the above sums the income of the Grand Duke seems miserably small. True it is, that Catherine took upon herself the care of his children and the expenses of their education and maintenance; but nevertheless, the keeping up of the Court at Gatchino, small as it was, cost not a little. Catherine herself wished to educate her son with English simplicity, but the foundation had already been laid by the Empress Elizavetta, and the desired alteration in the style of his bringing up only served to attach him more than ever to the old ways. He liked to dress well too. Try as he would to retrench his expenses, to lead a simple,

inexpensive life, he was constantly in pecuniary difficulties. His friend Alexander Borisovitch Kourakin, the same whom he mimicked in childhood, pledged his estate in order to raise funds for extricating the heir to the throne from the pressing want of ready money, and Paul subsequently repaid his generous friend with truly imperial interest. And not to him only was he indebted for timely aid, as we see by the following authentic anecdote.

When Paul had become Emperor, a simple country post-horse keeper came to the door of the Winter Palace, and begged to be allowed to see the Tzar. Although he carried "Bread and salt⁶," the servants attempted to drive him away, but he persisted in his request, merely begging that his name might be mentioned to Paul, which at last was done. He was received in the kindest manner, and on

⁶ An old national custom. A loaf of bread and a cellar of salt are invariably presented on a friend's taking possession of a new house, on the arrival of persons of importance at a town, &c. It is offered on dishes of various degrees of value, from gold to earthenware, or even wood.—(Tr.)

the Empress entering the room Paul asked her if she remembered his guest? On her confessing her forgetfulness of his identity, the Emperor reminded her that it was a person who had lent them horses, during their residence at Gatchino, to the amount of 2000 roubles, adding that it was his turn now to ask a loan of money. The post-horse keeper replied, that he, thank God, had sufficient money for his own wants, and that if ever his Imperial Majesty should again require any assistance, he was ready to devote his last farthing to him. This episode throws much light on the life that Paul and Maria led at Gatchino, which passed day by day quietly on until the 5th of November, 1796.

Paul Petrovitch had gone out on that day for a sledge drive with Maria Feodorovna, during which he related to his companions a remarkable dream that he had had the night before. He dreamed that he was raised into the air by some power unseen three distinct times. Count Ilinsky, who was of the driving party, interpreted it as being a sign of his soon

becoming Emperor, and Paul himself seemed to be of the same opinion.

The Imperial party had only just left the palace when Count Zooboff, brother to the Empress's favourite, galloped up to the gates from St. Petersburg, with the intelligence that Catherine was at the point of death. Not knowing exactly in what direction Paul was driving, Zooboff sent two messengers by different roads to meet him. On perceiving an hussar riding at full speed towards the sledge-party, Paul called out to him in the dialect of Little-Russia (the hussar regiments being composed principally of Little-Russians), "Who goes there?" "Zooboff has arrived! your Highness," replied the hussar in the same dialect.

"Are there many of them?" inquired Paul, punning, in an untranslatable way, on the word Zooboff (*teeth*).

"Only one, Your Highness."

"Well, we shall manage one, I dare say," remarked Paul, pulling off his hat, and crossing himself. What followed at Petersburg, with

the "one tooth" (i. e. Catherine's favourite) we already know.

Paul began his reign by showering favours on his courtiers of Gatchino and on the old friends of his late father, Peter III.; several of whom were extremely aged. But at the same time he showed kindness to many with whom, as Grand Duke, he had been on bad or indifferent terms; for instance, he said to a certain Chamberlain who had spread some unfavourable reports of him during his mother's life, "The Grand Duke does not intend to tell the Emperor all that he knows and hears." Very few suffered from disfavour. Both Ismailoff, who assisted Catherine in the affair of her accession to the throne, and the Princess Dashkoff, who played so distinguished a part on the same occasion, received an ukase to leave Moscow without delay, and to appear no more in either of the capitals. The Head Commandant of Moscow considered it his duty to deliver the orders of the Emperor to the Princess personally.

"In twenty-four hours?" exclaimed the

lady; "please to inform the Emperor that I left Moscow in twenty-four minutes!" She immediately ordered her carriage, and begging the Commandant to sit down while it was being prepared, and to be witness of her departure, she got ready for starting immediately. The instant the horses brought the equipage to her door she seated herself in it, and left the capital—"without delay."

Three ladies of important rank were banished from court on account of their bad reputation; for Paul, from the very beginning of his reign, exacted the utmost purity in the family and private life of those by whom he was to be surrounded.

Much new etiquette was introduced, and several clauses of the old laws of court etiquette abolished. He insists on Stanislaſſ Auguste Poniatoffsky, formerly King of Poland, standing in his presence, yet he himself stands before the venerable Colonel Tatischoff, whose infirmities compelled him to keep his seat: here we see the same Paul who, in his letter to the Metropolitan Platon, written on his accession

to the throne, "kisses the grey hair" of his former teacher of religion.

Honest confession of faults, and sincerity in repentance, always had weight with him. A merchant to whom Archaroff, the Governor-General of St. Petersburg owed 12,000 roubles, personally presented a petition to the Emperor at a review, complaining of the non-payment of the frequently demanded debt. Archaroff was in attendance on the Emperor when the petition was placed in his hands; Paul glanced at its contents, and that was sufficient for him.

"I have something the matter with my eyes this morning," said he, turning to Archaroff—"exactly as if something had got into them. I cannot see to read. Be so kind, Nicolaï Petrovitch, as to read this to me!"

Archaroff took the paper, saw what it was, and began to read it in a low voice; but Paul entreated him to read louder, saying that somehow he was hard of hearing that morning. Archaroff raised his voice sufficiently, merely for the Emperor alone to hear him. But this did not succeed either,—Paul made him shout

sufficiently loud for all around to hear distinctly the whole history; not only that he did not pay the merchant his debt, but that he had pushed him out of the house when he came to ask for his money.

“What is the meaning of all this?” said Paul on the conclusion of the reading, “is it a complaint about you, Nicolai Petrovitch?”

Archaroff had nothing to do but to confess the truth, and he was compelled to pay the debt that very day; but nothing more serious occurred.

But Paul could not endure contradiction. A young officer once presumed to persist that he was standing in the line with the rest, when the Emperor, at one of his favourite reviews, shouted to him to fall into his place; and on his attempting to excuse himself by saying he had not recognized his Majesty, the effect was like “oil on the fire” (i. e. adding fuel to the flame). Then and there the unfortunate youth’s gold-lace bands, the signs of his rank, were torn off, and it was only through the earnest mediation and warm representations of old Colonel Tatischoff that he was pardoned in the

course of a few days. Derjavin, the great poet, also incurred Paul's wrath by a hasty answer.

On his appointing Derjavin to a certain post, Paul, remembering his extremely free and easy style of conversing with the late Empress Catherine, reminded him that he must be more guarded and less impatient in his expressions; upon which Derjavin answered that he could not alter his nature and be as guarded and as patient as Paul. The result of this frankness was an ukase from the Senate, which simply said that the Secret Counsellor Derjavin was to remain in his former situation, in consequence of an impertinent answer.

But the reform that was the most felt was that regarding the army. Paul's speciality was his soldiery, and at his own little Court at Gatchino he had introduced the Prussian military style. Neither Catherine, Potemkin, nor Souvoroff approved of the adoption of a foreign method; and the latter said, "The Russians always beat the Prussians—then why should we copy them?" On his becoming Emperor, Paul made his favourite style that of the whole army, and his

Gatchino regiments, who had before been the laughing-stock of the rest, were now sent to St. Petersburg, made Guards of, and set up as examples to their comrades. Besides this promotion, the Gatchino officers received a reward of a hundred serfs of the Crown each. A new style of uniform was introduced,—curls, pig-tails, three-cornered hats, &c., &c.; the coats were loose and roomy; the tight ones came in in the reign of Alexander I. But the curls and tails were a great trial to the soldiers; when a review was about to take place, the dressing of their hair frequently commenced over night; it was greased with tallow and powdered with rye-flour. With a head thus dressed it was a matter of difficulty and even danger for a soldier to go to sleep during the night, for in the first place he might spoil his curls by lying down, and in the second the rats and mice were very fond of the tallow and flour. There are many instances of pig-tails being eaten off by the rats, more especially as some of the barracks, for instance the red ones at Moscow, were infested with vermin. The three-cornered hats were

also a source of trouble; when the word of command, "Running march!" was given, the hats used to fly from the heads of the men in all directions, so that a distinct body of soldiers was established on purpose to pick them up. Souvoroff, on receiving some little sticks that were to serve as measures for the curls and pig-tails in question, said, "Powder's not gunpowder, curls are not cannons, pig-tails are not sword-knots; and I am not a German, but a true-born Russian⁷." These words, on coming to the ears of Paul, led to a misunderstanding between him and the Field-Marshal. But in the sequel, after Souvoroff's Alpine expedition, when Paul and he were friends again, and the former said that he ought to be an angel to be able to reward the veteran as he deserved, the experiences of the march proved the inconvenience of many of the plans that Souvoroff had disapproved of so much at the outset; for instance, during the

⁷ "Poudra ne porokh, boucli ne poushki;
Kossa ne tessak;
Ya ne Németz, a prirodny Russak,"

Souvoroff was very fond of uttering his odd observations in similar rough rhymes.—(Tr.)

passage over the heights of the Alps, the carrying of the standards on their long poles inconvenienced the soldiers so much that they were obliged to chop them up for fire-wood. Paul yielded, and permitted much less of the severity in discipline, towards the end of his reign, which he had made such a point of insisting on at its commencement.

He also made new rules about the service of the nobles, insisting that all who were on the list of service should really *serve*, that is, perform certain duties. In Catherine's reign there were a great many persons on the list of guardsmen who never were on duty in their lives. In the Priobrajensky regiment alone there were 2000 such persons, and in the guards in general upwards of 20,000 ! It was the custom to enter the names of mere infants on the lists, and while the little fellows were still gambolling at home, and learning to read and write, they used to be promoted to various degrees of rank ; on attaining a fit age and officer's rank, they sometimes joined a regiment, but very frequently remained at home altogether. It even happened that expectant parents received

regimental blanks as certificates of rank for their *unborn children*.

A strict disciplinarian, as we see, Paul set his face against effeminacy and luxury among the officers, which in Catherine's time had reached such a pitch, that they wore, not only fur cloaks, but even muffs. Catherine herself encouraged the fashion by making presents of muffs to the ambassadors who accompanied her on her tour to the Crimea. The Generals and their officers frequently wore plain clothes, while in certain regiments the gorgeous magnificence of the uniforms was astonishing. For instance the cuirassiers wore purple mantles, embroidered with silver eagles, which were thrown over their cuirasses—this was a whim of Potemkin's, who was the commander of this regiment, and the grand inventor of military elegances. Sometimes the officers would go out simply in their dressing-gowns to gather mushrooms, while their wives donned their uniforms and did duty for them. During the war with Sweden, we hear of a Mrs. Colonel Mellin, who dressed herself in her husband's

clothes and placed herself at the head of his men. But that was at a time when Catherine herself reviewed her army in masculine garb, astride on horseback, and when the Princess Dashkoff begged to have the command of a regiment—so that the conduct of Mrs. Colonel Mellin does not appear particularly outrageous for the period. As Grand Duke, Paul could not abide all this, and on his coming to the throne it was never heard of more. The muffs and pelisses were entirely prohibited in the army; it was considered unnecessary luxury for an officer to shelter himself under an umbrella in a shower; the uniforms, instead of costing 120 roubles, were only to cost 22. One day he met an officer whose sword was being carried by a soldier who followed him, when Paul stopped him, and remarked that if it were too heavy for the officer himself to carry, he need not have it at all. The soldier was promoted on the spot, and received the sword from the Emperor's own hands, while the officer was reduced to the ranks.

Paul was a religious man; during his reign

an ukase was issued concerning the observance of the Sabbath, prohibiting labour on that day, and inculcating the passing of it in a proper manner. He never ate meat, &c., &c., on Wednesdays and Fridays, and at a time too when Fasts were but little observed by the upper classes. Being much pleased with the troops on the occasion of a grand review, he rewarded the men with money, and in addition to that desired that each might receive a present of some fish. As this happened during the fast that precedes Christmas, many understood it as a general hint to observe the fasts instituted by the Orthodox Church.

Soon after his accession Paul paid a visit to the Synod, and proposed a few questions for solution to the members, which they attempted to turn-off by common-place answers; but this did not suit Paul, he went deep into the subject, quoting text after text, and proving that he thoroughly understood it; also showing that he felt deeply the duties of the clergy, and their relations towards their flock. He entered incognito, during a visit to Moscow, the Church

of St. John the Warrior, and there heard a sermon preached by the parish priest, which pleased him extremely. He requested that it might be transcribed for him, and ever since Father Matthew's sermon lay, with a prayer book, on a little table by the side of Paul's bed. He was decidedly superstitious, and we have already seen that he was a great believer in dreams. Sensitive and nervous in a high degree, impressionable and imaginative, it is not to be wondered at—especially when we take into consideration his early training—that he believed in ghosts. The following is an authentic account of an adventure of his in St. Petersburg during his early manhood.

He was walking out one moonlight night with his friend Kourakin, when Peter the Great (who died many years before his birth) appeared to him. He not only saw him, but felt his touch, heard his voice: "Paul!" said the spectre, "poor Paul! poor Grand Duke!" He invariably turned pale when, in after years, he mentioned the circumstance. The voice, and the words of Peter, which he seemed to con-

sider prophetic, rang in his ears. The conviction that he had actually seen the ghost of Peter, was strengthened by the singular fact, that the Empress Catherine happened to select the very spot where, as it appeared to Paul, the spectre had left him, as the site for the celebrated monument which she raised to the memory of Peter. Kourakin, who was walking a little behind Paul, observed that he was squeezing his side close to the stone wall as he moved along, which of course, would account for the sensation of cold that Paul complained of, and which he attributed to the touch of the apparition. Kourakin in vain endeavoured to prove that the stone-wall was the true cause of the chill his imperial friend felt, and to assure him that he himself had not seen any thing of the ghost; Paul was thoroughly convinced that Peter had really appeared to him.

Another circumstance which occurred after he had become Emperor also bears the stamp of mystery, and can hardly be omitted here, as another instance of his belief in the supernatural.

A soldier on duty at the old Summer Palace


informed his commanding officer that he had seen a vision. A grey-headed old man had appeared to him and desired him to tell the Emperor that a church must be built on the site of the Palace, and dedicated to St. Nicholas, with an altar in honour of St. Michael. When the soldier attempted to object that he dare not speak to the Emperor, the old man said that his Majesty already knew of this. Paul was informed of the affair, and according to the words of contemporaries, he is said to have replied, "Yes, yes, I do know about it." Soon after a church was duly erected on the appointed site, dedicated as the vision had enjoined to SS. Nicholas and Michael; and a new palace built in the place of the old one, and called the Michaeloffsky.

In it the Emperor Paul died.

We must observe that the Emperor's two sons born in 1796 and 1798, were named Nicholai and Michael, the former being the first of the name in the Imperial genealogy. There is another coincidence connected with this story which is at any rate singular. The old man,

whom of course the soldier took for St. Nicholas himself, said that he should see the Emperor in *thirty years*, and it was exactly thirty years afterwards that the Emperor *Nicholas* was firmly seated in his throne, although he was not the next in succession, but had become Tzar by the refusal of his elder brother Constantine to take on himself the cares of the empire. After all, it is more than probable that Paul may have related one of his own dreams, and that his love of the supernatural was taken advantage of by those who had their own private ends in view, and who made the most of their Sovereign's peculiarities accordingly.

Paul always rose at five o'clock in the morning, rubbed his face with ice, and dressed himself with the utmost despatch. At six he was ready to receive his ministers, and other servants of the crown, with their respective reports, and no one dared appear late at these early receptions. Once the Procureur-General, Samoiloff, was half an hour too late. The servants of the crown in Catherine's reign were accustomed to rise late enough, and therefore



it was not astonishing if Samoiloff did make his appearance at half-past six. But the Emperor insisted that orders, once made, should be strictly obeyed, and he desired to be informed as soon as Samoiloff was seen to approach the palace. His command was so exactly fulfilled that he had time to go down stairs and meet the delinquent at the very door just as he arrived. He was extremely confused, the more so when informed that his Imperial Majesty had been waiting for him ever since six o'clock, and no longer required his services. Samoiloff was obliged to send in his resignation soon after.

At eight o'clock the audience concluded, and at twelve Paul dined with his family. He used to say that there was no reason why an Emperor should be deprived of a pleasure which every private person enjoyed, and therefore abolished the old plan of each member of the Imperial Family having a separate table and maintenance, desiring that all should assemble at one time with himself and the Empress. The result of this new regulation was a vast economy in the

expenses of the Imperial household; added to which, he desired that all the purveyors should be dismissed, and the provisions for the use of the Palace bought at the markets at market prices. He paid much attention to the prices of goods in general, and personally begged the merchants to be more conscientious; for the extraordinary luxury and extravagance of his mother's reign, had had the effect of letting them demand what price they chose.

He generally drove out in the morning, visiting various government offices and establishments, or superintending the reviews of his troops. On one occasion he arrived at the Military College at so early an hour that the President, Count N. I. Saltykoff, had not yet come. Paul waited for him an hour with exemplary patience—then a second, and at last Saltykoff arrived, when Paul quietly told him that if his duties were too arduous for him he might resign his appointment; but on Saltykoff's begging forgiveness, Paul's wrath was appeased, and the President remained in his place. On a similar early visit to the Synod, he found all the mem-

bers duly assembled, which afforded him great satisfaction. The Government offices were now no longer opened at noon, but at a far earlier hour. At one of the frequent reviews Paul observed an *employé*, on his way to business, stop to gaze at the military evolutions, and going up to him, he asked him to what branch of the service he belonged. On receiving his answer the Emperor took his watch from his pocket, and showed it to the *employé*, remarking,—“ See it is nearly half-past ten ! Good-bye ! I am in a hurry ; it is time to be at business.” It was kindly spoken, and the hint was not lost on the hearer, who hurried away, almost running, to his office. Delays and confusion in the affairs that the Senate had to deal with, were the Emperor’s abhorrence, and he liked his orders and ukases to be known and obeyed in the most distant parts of his Empire, on the shortest possible notice. Couriers, the number of which was no less than a hundred and twenty, flew in all directions with the utmost despatch, accomplishing the distance between St. Petersburg and Moscow (upwards of 600 versts) in less

than forty-eight hours, and performing other journeys with no less remarkable quickness.

After these morning expeditions, the military officers used to assemble at the Palace, when those of the humblest grade were admitted to the Emperor's apartments. A luncheon and vodka (corn-brandy) were always provided, but Paul himself never drank any wine, and detested the smell of spirits from those around him.

After dinner Paul rested a little, and then again went out, this time for a ride, drive, or promenade. The etiquette that Paul had established required, that on meeting him all gentlemen should descend from their equipages to salute him, and that the ladies should stand on the steps of their carriage. If we recollect that at that time both ladies and gentlemen wore silk stockings and low shoes, we can realize the extreme inconvenience with which the observance of this rule was attended, for those whom it concerned. Paul was a persecutor of luxury in any form; he used to say that he would eat off pewter plates if that would serve

as an example to others ; and perhaps we have a key to the solution of the problem proposed to us by the consideration of the above rule. It was nothing more or less than a means of abolishing the use of silk stockings, each pair of which, imported from foreign parts costs Russia several *kools*⁸ of flour. Hessian boots, and a single-breasted camisole formed, in Paul's opinion, the most convenient of all dresses for persons who did not wear uniform.

As the Emperor never missed his daily airing, either on horseback or in a carriage, regardless of the weather, the descent of the elegant cavaliers from their carriages in the muddy streets of St. Petersburg and Moscow in rainy weather⁹ led frequently to scenes that were comic enough, but sometimes their results were very tragic. Tradition tells a story in the latter mood, that happened at Moscow.

⁸ A pair of silk stockings cost $4\frac{1}{2}$ roubles, and a kool (or Bass sack) of flour, containing 9 poods, or 324 lbs. avoirdupois, cost $1\frac{1}{2}$ rouble.

⁹ Mr. Andrèeff forgets the spring, that season of poetry, ague, and *the thaw*, when the mud, even in the capitals, is past the imagination of an untravelled Briton.—(Tr.)

M. Daloco, a teacher of music, and an eminent one too in his day, had to make such a descent at the Beautiful Gate (a sort of triumphal arch) in the midst of the most impassable mud. Fearful of soiling his new silk stockings, he stood on the steps of the carriage, like a lady, and this manœuvre being observed by the Emperor, who probably conjectured that Daloco, as a foreigner, fancied he might go unpunished—he desired that the music master should be led round the arch three times. The poor fellow, either from cold or fright, fell ill of a fever on his return home, and died in consequence.

We must observe, however, that the extreme zeal of the Police Master General very frequently led to an exaggeration of the Emperor's orders. For instance, one day Paul observed a certain carriage and horses from the window, and asked Archaroff (the Police Master in question) to whom it belonged. He replied that they were the property of Count Roumiantzoff, upon which the Emperor remarked that it was a pity the harness was not made after the German fashion. Now it happened

that the Count was a great fancier of every thing German, he was surrounded by Germans, detested Moscow, and spoke Russ with a German accent; and Paul, who frequently gave way to dry humour, probably merely jested when he mentioned the harness, in allusion to the Count's mania, but Archaroff understood it otherwise. He imagined that the Emperor really preferred the German style to that of Russia, and he forthwith set to work on all the izvoztchiks¹ of St. Petersburg, ordering them to adopt the German style of harness without delay. The poor fellows petitioned for mercy—it was ruin to them—and their piteous complaints reached the ears of the Emperor, who gently told Archaroff that he had gone a little too far.

In the evening there was another gathering in the Palace on the return of the Emperor from his airing; it was generally of a private, almost family character, and the Empress Maria Feodorovna, as the lady of the house, used to make tea for her guests.

¹ Drivers of public conveyances.

The Emperor retired to rest at eight o'clock, and at the same hour all lights were extinguished in the city. St. Petersburg, which in Catherine's time was wont to turn night into day, now had to go early to bed as well as early to rise ; and whosoever wished to sit up later than eight o'clock, took every precaution that the lights in his dwelling should not be observable from the streets.

The Emperor Paul departed this life on the evening of the 11th of March, 1801.

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